NEW STATESMAN

The condition of Labour

Ambassador College

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Plus: Namibia, the bluff that failed/Ford's numbers/Ian McEwan on Susan Sontag's photography

LABOUR'S GOOD FOR BRITAIN

A FOUR-PART SURVEY

IT SOUNDS NICE. BUT IS IT TRUE?

In defence of the Anti-Nazis

It often seems that the British just do not like their young; possibly, the mark of a society so disgruntled with itself that it would really prefer to die out. Generally, young people are complained against for their social irresponsibility, political apathy, and inability to give a short account of how Cabinet government works. However, such complaints are nothing to what happens if the young actually up and do something: rarely are their enthusiasms seen as initiating anything less than the downfall of civilisation, and the diatribes of the newspapers against the Anti-Nazi League are a flawless case in point. It is a regular, if unsubstantiated allegation that the ANL is nothing but a front for the Trots of the Socialist Workers' Party, and Hugo Young of the *Sunday Times* – normally a commentator of conspicuous sanity — has described the League as 'a forerunner of the forces of darkness'.

One might have thought the nation would congratulate itself on being able to rustle up several thousands of young men and women ready to bestir themselves against a perfectly manifest social evil. It is, of course, true that the spokespersons of the League are frequently rock singers whose dress is calculated to offend respectable taste: well, in frankly denouncing working-class racism wherever it appears, they do speak of what they know, and plenty of establishment causes have been ready to cite the pronouncements of actors or opera-singers perfectly ignorant of the subject in hand.

No doubt there are criticisms to be made of the ANL. Its members perhaps over-estimate their own importance in curbing the progress of the National Front. In truth, the NF's electoral and other problems derive chiefly from the fact that only racialist monomania can keep its unsteady ranks together, and voters care little for monomaniacs, even ones who set out to exploit their prejudices.

Certainly ANL supporters who argue that the Front should be banned, or its speakers censored, are seriously mistaken: those who cite Hitler's famous statement that his own movement might have been frustrated in its early years by exercise of the 'utmost brutality' forget that Schicklegruber, apart from a few lucky guesses, did not turn out well as a political estimator. In countries where the Nazis once ruled, re-shaping the political structure with guns and piano-wire, there may be a morally tolerable case for suppression of the Nazis' heirs. Britain, however, has not been so unlucky.

It still seems a bit steep to see in the ANL the 'forces of darkness'. To be sure, its National Secretary, Paul Holborrow, is a member of the SWP. But most other members of the steering committee – Peter Hain, Neil Kinnock, MP, Audrey Wise, MP, Ernie Roberts et al.– are scarcely Trots, whatever else they may be. Suppose that Mr Holborrow and his SWP friends were, with manipulative cunning, to try to turn the ANL away from its simple anti-racialist platform and towards some sinister purpose of their own – nationalising the mustard-factories, perhaps, or substituting Vanessa Redgrave for the Queen – is it really plausible that they could succeed? It is a long time since the Comintern days when 'fronts' really were marched and counter-marched with clockwork precision.

What is conspicuous about the ANL is the passion and idealism of its supporters. No doubt they are capable of excess. No doubt those of them, if any, who continue in political commitment will have a good deal to learn about tolerance, caution and the proper rules of debate. It would be nice to think there were more examples around from whom they might learn these valuable qualities, without picking up a good many sleazier habits at the same time.

We have, after all, a Tory leadership which has shown itself capable of truckling quite eagerly to neo-fascism. And at a time when the Labour Party's leaders affect a worldly 'realism' when confronted with evidence of the party's recent dishonesties, it is hard to see the Anti-Nazi League as the darkest feature visible on the present political scene.

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Notes on Politics and Power

The numbers game at Ford

Christopher Hird writes: Ford have the money to pay a substantial wage increase to their 57,000 workers currently on strike. That is the conclusion of an examination of their finances, their investment plans and their reply to the unions' claim. In making their 1978 wage claim, the unions have made Ford's ability to pay a major part of their case. They say their claim – for a 35 hour week, £20 on basic pay and improvements in fringe benefits, such as pensions and holidays – can be met without damaging Ford's investment plans and without any price increases. In their reply Ford claim the package could add 60 per cent to wage costs – though they have not produced any evidence to support this. In the absence of detailed information about Ford's operation it is not possible to calculate the exact cost of the claim. But it is possible to discover that there is scope for an offer that would satisfy both the workers and the government's pay guidelines, without endangering Ford's financial position.

Last year Ford made profits of £246 million and this year the unions – who accurately forecast this – are going for profits of about £300m. In their reply to the unions' claim, Ford have not commented on this, other than to admit that 'profits are on a rising trend'. Indeed, it looks as though this forecast will prove to be conservative. Ford have been doing very well this year. All the indications are that they will increase their share of the UK car market, which has been growing by almost 20 per cent. They are holding their own in the commercial vehicle field. Ford prices in the UK market as a whole are at the moment about 15 per cent higher than in 1977. Against this raw material and input prices may have risen by a tenth by the end of the year and, under the 1977 pay deal, wages have so far risen by around 12 per cent.

Calculating Ford's wage bill is tricky because the new wage agreement starts at the beginning of October, but at the moment it seems to be running at a rate of just over £40m. a month. This includes all labour costs, such as national insurance, pensions, sports fields etc. An increase of a third in the 1978 agreement would bring 1978's calendar total wage bill to something under £550m., compared with £447m. in 1977. So if sales income in 1978 rises by a fifth to £2,800m., after allowing for depreciation and interest charges, Ford's could make a profit of around £400m.

Ford argue that it is wrong to see one year's profits in isolation and that the money is needed for investment: they have told the unions they plan to spend £265m. a year for the next four years. This is a massive investment programme: the historic cost of all Ford's existing plans is only £263m. and the cost of replacing it just under £700m. Much of this £1,000m.-plus investment programme is for new models which will not come into production until well into the eighties: already Ford are spending over £50m. each year on research and development.

As much of this investment will not start earning profits for anything up to five years, there is a strong argument for Ford financing at least part of it from borrowed money rather than today's cash flow. At the moment Ford's total debt is just over £50m. – less than 10 per cent of net assets. This is an extremely low level of borrowing for a company of Ford's size. Ford's cash flow is very strong. On the conservative assumption of £300m. profits this year Ford would be able to cover its capital spending programme and its increased working capital needs. The investment programme itself should ensure there is virtually no tax to pay. Even in a full year of a 33 per cent pay increase, on current sales and cost levels, Ford would be generating funds of around £300m.

Against this background – which shows that Fords at least have the capacity to pay much more than 5 per cent – the company's behaviour looks bizarre. It is not beyond the wit of experienced negotiators to devise a 'self financing' pay offer that would satisfy the government even though the recent published guidelines for productivity deals are a bit tighter than last year. But Ford's behaviour shows no signs of such an approach. Rather the opposite, as the story of how the strike started shows. Ford decided that, following last Thursday's meeting with the union negotiators, they would send each Ford worker a synoposis of the company's reply to the union claim. Workers received this as Thursday's night shift started – hours after the negotiations finished. Immediately many of them walked out. In this way Ford ensured that the strike was called by the rank and file workers, not their leaders – who may have hesitated. Seasoned industrial relations people know that once workers have, off their own bat, walked through the factory gates, it is very hard to get them back.

Ford should know this too. In 1971 a damaging nine week strike was the result of Ford telexing their offer direct to the Ford factories as negotiations ended. That strike was eventually brought to an end by Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon going to Ford Europe over the heads of the union negotiators. The chief negotiator at the time was Moss Evans, now general secretary of the T&G.

Mr Smith goes to Washington

Godfrey Hodgson writes: Free from Camp David, President Carter intends to turn his attention to Rhodesia. The President and his national security assistant, Zbigniew Brzezinski are perfectly aware that over the past month events in southern Africa have shot the Anglo-American peace plan down. Neither they nor anyone else in Washington yet seems to have any very clear idea of what can be done to put it together again. In the meantime the State Department is confronted by the dilemma which arises out of Ian Smith's request for visitors' visas for himself and his whole Executive. Their intention is to lobby personally for Congressional support.

A senior State Department official agonised over the problem, which as Washington sees it goes like this: Smith has a Rhodesian passport, since Britain took away his British passport. To admit him would therefore risk annoying London, which Washington doesn't much mind doing, but also would risk a major row in Britain, which Washington minds more. Even more distasteful, there would be major difficulties with black Africa. On the other hand, to refuse Smith a visa would run against the Carter administration's whole instinct for more open government and also against the general mood in Washington. And, more to the point, Smith has been invited by some 26 Senators, some of them very powerful, like Senator Jesse Helms, a doughty Republican conservative from North Carolina who has given the administration plenty of trouble on the Panama Treaty and other issues. Virtually everyone I spoke to takes it for granted that Smith will get his visa, and will come.

There was already a perceptible boost for conservative attitudes on southern Africa when Bishop Muzorewa was here, also sponsored by right-wingers like Helms, a few weeks ago. Smith's visit can be expected to reinforce those here who think that the Anglo-American plan, in so far as it tries to include Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, is no better than spineless truckling to godless atheistic communism.

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The Shah's shopping list

Christopher Hird writes: During the last few months the Department of Trade has granted export licenses for the export of the following items to Iran: 8,000 anti-riot guns; 26,000 CS gas cartridges; 26,000 CS grenades; 20,000 mini smoke grenades and 2,000 screening smoke grenades. In addition clearance in principle has been given for 20,000 anti-riot helmets; 20,000 respirators; 20,000 anti-riot shields; 20,000 baton rounds and 5,000 anti-riot guns, Iran has, however, apparently asked for delivery of the following items to be speeded up: 2,000 anti-riot guns; and 250,000 rubber bullets.

What matters is who you know

John Shirley writes: Anyone who fosters the illusion that England is a land of liberty where justice showers equally upon us all should ponder the disturbing case of Mr Joshua Anim, and less fortunate people like him.

Mr Anim is blind, black and Ghanaian. He came to this country in 1974 for six months to receive medical treatment. When this period expired he appealed for an extension of his stay, but was refused, and in November, 1976 a Deportation Order was signed against him. He unsuccessfully appealed against this too. Nonetheless, the Order was deferred a number of times, at the request of the Ghana High Commission, while treatment went on.

Until two weeks ago Mr Anim continued to live quietly in a hostel for Ghanaian students in Earls Court apparently in the belief that his High Commission had settled the details of his continued UK residence. He attended hospital appointments and went regularly to prayer meetings.

All this changed dramatically on September 13 when Mr Anim walked innocently into the office of Aliens Registration Board. He had

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been accepted for a B.A. degree course at Goldsmith's College, with fees paid for by his government, and acting upon the advice of a supposedly friendly policeman he had decided to inform the authorities of his new status. He had with him letters from Goldsmith's and the High Commission.

He got more than he bargained for. Instead of the recognition he expected, he was promptly arrested under Schedule 2 of the Immigration Act, 1971 and hauled off to Pentonville Prison, where – because of the lack of facilities for blind people – he was deposited in the prison hospital. His personal possessions, including a cassette recorder, were taken from him and he was refused the eye drops that he normally takes as part of his medical treatment. Friends who saw him the next day reported that he was, understandably, in a state of shock.

Mr Anim's legal status at this point was an unenviable one. Because a Deportation Order had already been signed against him, he was involved not in a legal, but in an administrative, process. He had not, nor was he to be, charged with any offence. Consequently, he had no right of *habeus corpus*, nor of access to a solicitor. To make things worse, he was not technically even a resident of the United Kingdom. All he could look forward to was being ignominiously expelled.

But Mr Anim is in many ways a fortunate man: he has sensible, middle-class English friends who know their way around the system. And the day after his arrest, the chaplain at Pentonville telephoned one of them, an actress named Sarah Lamden. Mrs Lamden took legal advice herself, then contacted the United Kingdom Immigrants' Advisory Service, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, and Lord Avebury, the Liberal spokesman on Immigration. Avebury, in his turn, began to blitz the Home Office with telephone calls and letters sent by hand.

At the beginning of last week the position still seemed hopeless. At the Home Office Brynmor John, the junior minister, claimed he had no power to release Anim as a Deportation Order had already been signed. His continued detention in prison was justified on two grounds: first, that he had absconded from his student accommodation earlier in the year thus preventing the serving of the Order on him; secondly that there was no evidence of his acceptance by Goldsmith's College nor of his funding by the High Commission. Both these points were, incidentally, untrue.

Mrs Lamden tried another tack. She contacted a freelance journalist who suggested she spoke to the *Guardian*. This she did. The result was a down-page double-column story last Thursday morning headed 'Blind black student held in London gaol'. The BBC programme *Nationwide* picked up the tale and ran a studio item on it the same evening.

The effect of this Press interest was dramatic. By an extraordinary coincidence, the Home Office discovered the same afternoon that the documents from Goldsmith's College and the Ghana High Commission had been in the safe at Pentonville Prison all the time. Literally minutes before *Nationwide* went on the air, Mr Anim was released from gaol.

In a written Parliamentary answer last November, the Home Office revealed that in the first six months of 1977, 680 'non-criminal prisoners' were received into custody under Schedule 2 of the Immigration Act, 1971. Two hundred and twenty seven of them were kept in prison, one for an astonishing period of 301 days. It would be interesting to speculate on how many would have been detained at all had they the influential friends of Joshua Anim.

Free Photography

The meaning of an obscure massacre

Why did the massacre at Kassinga on 4 May receive so little coverage in the British press? Only the *Morning Star* and *Time Out* chose to print any photographs of the event, although Associated Press and the Namibian Support Committee made them readily available. Yet there was no shortage of attention to gory details when 100 whites were murdered at Kolwezi in Zaire shortly afterwards, on 19 May. If the press had given comparable coverage to the carnage at Kassinga and the events which surrounded it, the British public might have gained a clearer understanding of South Africa's manoeuvres in Namibia, which we detail on page 402.

Late in April, less than a week after South Africa signed and agreement on Namibia's future with the five nations of the Western Contact Group, the Republic's reconnaissance planes began to fly over Kassinga, some 250 kilometers inside Angola. On 4 May, at seven o'clock in the morning, French-built Mirage jets began to unleash bombs on the area. These were followed by a 'drop' of 1,000 paratroopers from US-built Hercules troop carriers. It is estimated that by the end of the day more than 600 Namibians had been killed, most of them children and old people. Countless others were wounded. The official South African explanation was that Kassinga was a military base for SWAPO. Eyewitness accounts of foreign journalists who visited the scene soon afterwards revealed that the South African story was a lie. Kassinga was a refugee camp, as the South Africans knew full well.

The massacre was planned with brutal cynicism to forestall a breakthrough in negotiations with the UN which might lead to fair and free elections in Namibia. Vorster wanted to provoke SWAPO's leaders into rejecting the agreement which he himself had already signed with the Western powers. He hoped thereby to portray the guerrillas as intransigents and earn for himself much-needed international sympathy. SWAPO were indeed temporarily provoked into breaking off negotiations. Vorster must have known it would not be worth risking such a crude ploy unless he could expect only the shallowest of coverage from the Western press.

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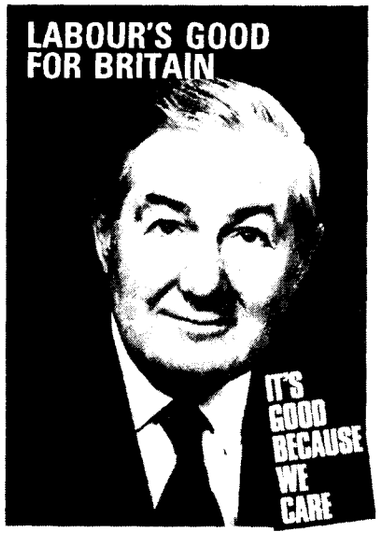
At Blackpool, Mr Callaghan will strive to project the competent, avuncular image of a 'natural party of government'. Obviously, there is something to go on: inflation has declined, and there are some flickers of economic revival. No less obviously, there is deep and well-justified unease within the party.

Short-term, it will be nip-and-tuck to win an election, whenever called, for the truth is that layers of Labour's traditional support have been flaking away steadily since 1974. Long-term, this fits into a pattern of long-term decline in the Labour vote: evidence presented recently in the NS (23 June) suggest that this decline is masked temporarily by middle-class defection from the Tories. Decay is not confined to the electoral aggregate: in Part 4 of this survey Stephen Kelly shows that Labour's ability to maintain an organisation in the field is now declining rapidly. (On Thursday September 14 at 3 pm the Secretary of the Labour Party learnt from the Prime Minister that the election for which he was preparing would not take place. The manner is that of a commander boldly manoeuvring divisions whose cohesion is already problematic, and is apt to become more so under such imperious treatment.)



Rhetoricians of the right claim to see such decay as part of a 'revolt against collectivism'. To less clouded eyes it should be plain that the British Labour movement, rather than exhibiting collectivism, seethes with sectional and individual ambitions: so much so, as Francis Castles (part 1) and Frank Field (part 2) point out in different ways, that its traditional aims are now imperilled by inability to deal with the most elementary of socialist questions, that of income distribution. (An attractive corollary is that Labour, along with the Liberals, has a practical record on libertarian issues, where the Tory commitment runs more to words than deeds.)

Something of the erosion in Labour's support – the disenchantment of skilled workers – may be explained through the impact on workers' incomes, distended by inflation, of the peculiarities of a tax system which once left them largely unscathed, and which they have not yet acquired the bourgeois means to minimise. In future issues of the NEW STATESMAN, efforts will be made to explain how Britain came to have a tax system which manages at once to cosset privilege, penalise endeavour, and fail to re-distribute income towards the poor. In the immediate context, it can be fairly seen as the cumulative result of slip-shod, ad-hoc thinking – in which Labour has acquiesced – and as a special case of Labour's general problem: that since 1964 the party has not been able to deliver to its supporters sufficient progress towards the fairer, more satisfying, and more prosperous society which was promised.

Flickers of euphoria aside, the British balance of payments continues to deteriorate by about £1,000 million a year. Meanwhile, the unemployment which is being incurred to *protect* the overseas balance increases so fast as to make it likely that 3 million people will be without work in the 1980s. Part 3 concerns the apathy of the Labour leadership when dealing with possible alternatives to the slightly-diluted monetarism responsible for these effects: on July 14 Dr Jeremy Bray MP showed in the NS that the Treasury's own econometric model was capable of justifying substantial economic expansion. Since then, the need for change has become more imperative. But the case remains unanswered, except by Civil Service briefs exhibiting customary dexterity in avoiding the issue.

It may not be surprising that the political executive which fails to challenge the orthodoxies of Treasury and City should be the same as that found incapable, in the African context, of controlling multinational corporations. But the awkward truth remains that economic lethargy undermines the basis of Labour's electoral appeal: namely, the economic growth will finance the repair of intolerable social decay, while allowing the prosperity of the already-prosperous to increase. Fine distinctions – surely baffling to the voters – may be drawn between 'democratic socialists' and 'social democrats': nonetheless, no Left-wing rhetoric has survived the impact of office sufficiently well to move Labour away from this essentially 'Croslandite' praxis. Pretences apart, Labour is a social-democratic party, which has sought, under Harold Wilson and James Callaghan to become the 'natural party of government' by diluting its class appeal.

In Part 1, an argument is presented, from comparison of British with European experience, to suggest that social-democratic parties *can* procure real social change – but only if they represent carefully-defined class interests with open determination. Labour's strategic misjudgment on this point has brought the party to a critical situation, where difficulties interlock and reinforce each other: other sections are concerned with particular aspects of the crisis.

The condition of Labour 1

Francis Castles* on the measurement of Labour's failure

The class constituency

Labour enters its last year of office looking perilously like a party which is hoping that some lucky combination of short-term political issues will enable it to conjure up a death-defying victory – or anyway, avoid outright defeat. The price may very well be tacit abandonment of any strategic determination to re-shape British society in a more humane and egalitarian mould.

The questions that arise are whether democratic socialist parties have done better elsewhere; if so, why they have succeeded where the Labour Party has failed; and whether their experience is replicable in British conditions. The obvious place to seek answers to such questions is in the political experience of the Scandinavian Social Democratic parties. Since the 1930s, each of them has acquired the status of the 'natural party of government'. In Sweden, 44 years of Social Democratic rule were only terminated in 1976, and opinion polls since then do not suggest the electorate is enchanted by the idea of giving the Bourgeois government a second term. Discounting the war years, both Norway and Denmark have had effectively Social Democratic administrations for more than two-thirds of the period since 1930. The contrast with Labour's 17 years of rule in the period 1930-78 is sharp indeed.

Has the political success of Scandinavian Social Democracy been bought by disavowing socialist objectives? Or have these societies experienced a genuine enhancement of welfare and social equality *as a result of political decision-making*?

For some time, the British intellectual Left has tended to dismiss out of hand the claims of the Scandinavians. If, as Olof Palme argues, Sweden is 'far ahead compared to other countries . . . and far ahead compared to what Sweden looked like 30 or 40 years ago', that is merely because Sweden has followed the economic path of all other advanced capitalist states. Thus Frank Parkin has argued in *Class, Inequality and Political Order* that the Scandinavian countries do not show unambiguously superior welfare performance to other Western nations: his theory being that the advanced capitalist economy always requires to buy off revolution.

The argument, from a wholly different standpoint, comes to the same conclusion as those who herald the 'end of ideology' in technologically advanced countries. It makes no matter who you vote for, since society is shaped by ineluctable economic pressures.

This Left-wing case stands or falls on the evidence which can be provided concerning relative levels of welfare and equality among advanced nations – it depends one might say, on whether the price of buying-off revolution varies noticeably. In a recent study, I have tried to show that in

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Shopping for the poor in Hulme, Manchester. The question is whether Labour cares enough to finance the attack on poverty.

respect of welfare at least, the evidence strongly favours the protagonists of the Scandinavian Social Democrats. The method is to take the level of current government expenditure as a rough measure of the extent to which social responsibility is taken for the welfare of the people; to take infant mortality as a specific measure of the level of health care; and public spending on education as a measure of commitment to the next generation – comparing these against an indicator of economic advancement: conveniently, Gross Domestic Product per head of population. Interesting comparisons can then be drawn between several Western nations.

First, it is apparent from the figures presented in the table (*overleaf*) that the basic Left-wing hypothesis – that similar levels of economic advancement means similar levels of welfare – is false. Of the four richest countries, two – Norway and Sweden – have high levels of government responsibility for welfare, high levels of health care, and a strong commitment to public education. The other two rich countries, Switzerland and the United States, have low levels of government intervention. Switzerland has a low commitment to public education, and the United States a remarkably high infant-mortality rate.

Second, leaving aside the question of economic advancement, there seem to be two quite distinct groups of countries to be seen. The three Scandinavian countries, plus Holland, consistently occupy the top four positions on all three measures of welfare. On the other hand are four others whose welfare record is inconsistent.

It might be suggested that what all four welfare leaders have in common is the smallness of their population, but Switzerland is also a small nation. (And other small countries, like Austria and Australia, have indifferent welfare records.)

Third, and obviously, we should note that three of the welfare leaders have a long record of Social Democratic political dominance, and the fourth – Holland – shares with them a crucial characteristic: weakness and fragmentation among the parties of the Right. Germany, Britain and the United States have variously poor welfare performances, and have well-entrenched parties of the Right.

The proposition that the strength of the political Right is inversely related to welfare performance can be supported by more detailed examination of a wider selection of states. But the argument is less simple when we move from welfare to issues of economic equality. All the available evidence suggests that the distribution of post-tax income is remarkably similar in advanced capitalist countries, including Scandinavia. But a great many democratic socialists are prepared, in practice and theory, to concede to the market a substantial role in determining income levels. The distinctive point in socialist strategy is the determination that certain crucial elements of life must be removed from the control of market forces – the provision of adequate standards of health-care, education, support in old age, and freedom from the fear of incapacity or unemployment. The current-revenue measure used here may reasonably be taken as an indicator of the strength or weakness of the market in determining a person's overall life-chance, and clearly the Scandinavian and Dutch parties have been more successful in modifying the market than has the British Labour Party.

Why should this be so? Whereas Britain's intellectual Left has criticised Scandinavia for being essentially no different from other advanced societies, another element within the Labour Party has looked regularly to their example. The 'reformist' argument, attributed to Anthony Crosland and his supporters, attributes the electoral success of the Scandinavian Social Democratic parties to their willingness to eschew narrow class goals, and in particular the traditional socialist goal of the common ownership of the means of production.

Such a reformist analysis, however, substatially misrepresents the political strategy adopted in Scandinavia, and it is hardly surprising that it should have led to meagre results for Labour. The nature of the misrepresentation is visible if we contrast the class support for the Scandinavian Social Democratic parties with that of Labour. In the latter 1960s, the heyday of reformism, the share of the working-class vote obtained by the Scandinavian parties varied between 62 and 75 per cent. In Britain in 1970 only 51 per cent of the working-class vote went to Labour.

We must conclude either that working-class voters in Scandinavia are very seriously deluded as to their class interests – or that the parties for which they vote serve those interests better than Labour has done. The latter seems somewhat more probable, and indeed Social-Democratic rule in Scandinavia has been marked by (1) considerable increases in real disposable income for all social groups, (2) much enhanced collective consumption through government intervention in the market mechanism, and (3) an implacable determination to avoid large-scale unemployment through the policies of the 'active labour market'.

In other words, the Social-Democratic parties have been electorally successful by offering tangible benefits to their major constituency in the working-class, and the nearest the British 'reformist' analysis comes to the truth is that indeed many benefits have also gone to white-collar groups. This has been consolidated politically by basing the Social-Democratic case on an appeal to the 'wage-earners' front', as against the owners of property and capital – and by continuing the promise to bring capital into social ownership.

The basic contrast is on the issue of unemployment. Since 1929 the Labour Party has, in practice, taken time and time again the line that there are some 'national' objectives – classically, the exchange rate – for which the wage-earners' interest in full employment may have to be sacrificed. The Swedish Social-Democrats came to power in 1932 with a programme specifically designed to counter the Depression, and its success established them firmly as the party serving working-class interests. Adherence to full employment has been unswerving, and has made the doctrine part of the Swedish political consensus. Any

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party adopting a policy which would markedly increase unemployment would ensure its immolation at the polls: four years after the onset of the oil crisis, Britain under Labour had unemployment in excess of six per cent, while Sweden under its first Bourgeois government for forty years had less than two per cent.

Refusal to sacrifice full-employment policy has perhaps been the vital factor in keeping the Swedish industrial structure from obsolescence. It has been possible for trade unions to regard the political commitment to employment as a basic guarantee for their members, allowing in turn a wide range of experiments in the cause of rationalisation and modernisation. When the consequence of increased productivity ceases to be structural unemployment – as it is in Britain – and when the promised pay-off has been seen to appear in higher wages, then conflict and co-operation between economic classes may take on a different meaning. It is at least arguable that much of the difference between the per capita wealth of Britain and the Scandinavian countries is attributable to a background in which the right to work is assumed, and in which if people are unable to work it is nonetheless possible for them to receive some of the fruits of increased productivity through an effective welfare system. Yet in British political reality, Labour has conceded, de facto, much ground to the Tory case that industrial efficiency will only be restored by a movement back towards economic savagery.

It is fair enough to point out that special factors have helped the Scandinavian parties to impose a more demanding and fruitful compromise upon capitalism. In Scandinavia the interests of the urban and the agricultural ruling classes remained disparate, instead of uniting as they did in Britain. The lateness and extreme rapidity of industrialisation in Scandinavia meant that there was no labyrinthine union system, dominated by old craft unions with their own brands of special interest. From its formal beginnings, the Swedish union movement was, and remains, formally dedicated to the 'equalisation of wages' – not a programme which would be readily accepted by the TUC. Equally, the dynamics of the British and the Scandinavian situations are very different today: in both cases, it is necessary to face the fact that the 'easy years' of the industrial economies may have passed for ever; but the Scandinavian parties have behind them a record of success in defending the interests of their natural supporters, whereas the British party has a record of unreliability which would be difficult to live down in times of economic boom.

But the fact that the lesson would now be difficult to apply does not make it any less relevant.

Delivering to voters: the European comparison

	Gross Domestic Product *per capita* in US dollars (1975)	Current revenue of government as % of GDP (1975)	Death in 1st year per 1,000 live births (1975)	Public spending on education as % of GDP (1973)
Sweden	9030	52.2	8.3	7.7
Switzerland	8870	31.9	10.7	4.7
United States	7910	30.7	16.1	6.7
Norway	7770	50.2	10.5	7.8
Denmark	7590	45.0	10.7	7.5
Germany	7250	40.9	19.7	4.1
Netherlands	6500	53.6	10.3	7.8
United Kingdom	3910	40.8	16.0	6.3

The condition of Labour (2)

Frank Field* on the end of consensus-through-growth

The comeback of poverty

The Labour party has always been committed to abolishing poverty; for many people it has been the cement which held the party together. Crosland believed that economic growth would help achieve this aim. But now Britain faces a sustained period of no, or slow, growth which will increase the numbers of the poor and bring cuts in their real living standards. It seems inconceivable that the rate of economic growth will provide the money to stop this happening. Without a change in its policies the Labour party will have to abandon some of its historical goals.

The first challenge is being mounted from the dole queues. At the moment there are 1.5 million unemployed and the Department of Employment expect the labour force to increase by a little over one million in the next eight years. Just to provide jobs for these extra workers would require an annual growth rate of between 3 per cent (say the Treasury) and 4 per cent (say the Department of Applied Economics at Cambridge). That is quite apart from doing anything about the current level of unemployment or taking any account of the impact that technological change – such as the introduction of microprocessors.

But no forecasting organisation expects growth to be anything like this level and the Cambridge group are forecasting 2.25 million unemployed by 1982 and 3.6 million five years later. And for most people unemployment brings poverty, because national insurance payments do not make up for the loss of earnings.

It is worth pointing out that the two key principles of Beveridge's social insurance scheme have still not been implemented.

First, Beveridge said that all the principal cash payments – for unemployment, disability and retirement will continue so long as need lasts. But today benefit is only paid for up to 12 months. Second, Beveridge said that insurance benefit payments should be high enough to keep the claimant's income above the poverty line. Again, this proposal has not been fully implemented. As a result, last year only a third of the unemployed could manage on national insurance benefit, compared with over two thirds thirty years ago. In the same period the proportion of unemployed who depended exclusively on supplementary benefit has risen from 10 to 42 per cent.

Just to maintain the real value of benefits paid to the unemployed in the next ten years would cost an extra £3,3000m. a year at 1977 prices. If the cost of benefits paid to pensioners and the rising number of single parent families are included, the social security budget will need to rise from its current level of £9,700m. to £13,500m. in 1987. This means that GNP needs to grow by over 16 per cent between 1977 and 1982 and by almost 40 per cent in the ten years up to 1987. Few people predict any such rate of growth anywhere approaching these levels.

There is a powerful argument for trying to at least maintain the real living standards of the poor: during the booming fifties and sixties an increasing number of people were living at the supplementary benefit poverty line. And the Supplementary Benefit Commission scale rates are far from generous: a mother, for example, is expected to cover all the needs of a child under five on less than 63p a day.

The numbers of households dependent on supplementary benefit has risen from a little over a million in 1945 to almost 3 million in 1976. If dependants are included, the total number of people on supplementary benefit is five million. In addition almost 2.3 million people are living under the supplementary benefit level.

Although the poor have shared in the increased prosperity of the last thirty years or so two pieces of research show there is still a need to improve the relative incomes of those living around the supplementary benefit level, particularly those with children.

The first act of evidence comes from nutritionists who have tried to discover whether poor families can feed their children adequately. Work by Caroline Walker and Michael Church has shown that 'low

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income groups and large families tend to buy more efficiently than high income groups and small families.' But their second finding was that 'the present supplementary benefits allowance is inadequate to cover the food needs of the largest 8 to 10 year olds, even with the most efficient purchasing pattern.'

The second set of evidence on the inadequacy of the living standards of the poor comes from official surveys. Drawing on DASS surveys, the Supplementary Benefits Commission, in its evidence to the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth, said: 'The evidence presented . . . regarding the standard of living of supplementary benefit recipients strongly suggests that the supplementary benefits scheme provides, particularly for families with children, incomes that are barely adequate to meet their needs at a level that is consistent with the normal participation in the life of the relatively wealthy society in which they live'. This 'barely adequate' standard of living was the end product, not of a period of slow or nil growth but of the post-war prosperity.

The boom years have also left a legacy of low pay. Since 1886, there has been a remarkable stability in relative earnings. In 1886 the lowest paid 10 per cent of manual men workers carried 68.6 per cent of median earnings. By 1977, they were earning just over 70 per cent of median earnings. The numbers earning less than the supplementary benefit poverty line for each year since 1974 are given in the table below:

Incomes below supplementary benefit level of those normally in full-time work or self-employed (Great Britain).

	Thousands	
Year	Families	Persons
1974	130	360
1975	210	630
1976	290	890

Source: DHSS

While it must be emphasised that these data are open to a fairly wide margin of error, the trend from the table is nevertheless clear. The number of poverty wage earners has risen from 130,000 in 1974 to 290,000 two years later.

The numbers earning less than the supplementary benefit payments to which they would be entitled if they were not working is but the tip of the low pay iceberg. An overall measurement of the extent of low pay comes from looking at the TUC minimum wage target of two thirds of average male earnings. The 1977 New Earnings Survey shows that 1.1 million men and 2.7 million women workers, a total of 3.8 million adult workers overall, earn below two-thirds of average earnings, even after taking into account overtime. Excluding overtime the numbers rise to 1.7 million and 2.8 million respectively, a total of 4.5 million adult workers.

So the years of affluence have failed the poor in two very important respects: they have afforded them an unacceptably low relative standard of living and they have done little to improve the relative earnings of the poverty wage-earner.

But during the boom there has been all-party agreement on poverty, with both the Conservatives and Social Democrats supporting the view that improvements in the living standards of the poor should be one of the first calls on an ever-expanding national product. Social Democrats have gone further and argued that greater equality can and should be brought about by staking a disproportionate claim on the fruits of growth for those on low income. All that is threatened by a period of slow or even nil growth because there has been no political commitment to improving the living standards of the poor by means of a *redistribution* of present income.

Moreover, a period of slow growth will see an increase in the numbers made poor by unemployment as well as an increase in the numbers on low income as a result of demographic changes. The living standards of this increasing army of poor people will therefore be reduced unless the increase is matched by a policy of redistribution. The rise in the numbers of poor will require a real increase in the social security budget.

This presents a fundamental challenge to the Labour Party. It can accept the Crosland thesis that in the rough and tumble of our democratic society the electorate won't stand for redistribution during a period of slow growth. But this means that Labour will be forced to abandon the historical goals to which it has always paid generous lip service, and support cuts in the real living standards of the poor. Alternatively, the Labour Party could embrace a programme which breaks the all party agreement on linking redistribution to periods of high growth.

This will entail the party spelling out what is meant by redistribution. Redistributing along traditional lines – from rich to poor – will be inadequate to meet the challenge of maintaining, let alone increasing, the relative living standards of those on low incomes. Redistribution must also be pursued horizontally from the childless to those with children. Redistribution will also need to take place from younger to older sections of the community and from the consumers to some low paid producers. And, in a period of rising unemployment, there will need to be a redistribution from those in work to the workless.

The standard refrain to this is that redistribution has already reached its limits. Labour needs to take a much more critical look at the extent to which redistribution has occurred during the post-war years. The 'reaching the limits of redistribution' cry has allowed the privileged to become the convenient beneficiaries of their own propaganda – acting as a powerful sedative on the conscience of the privileged in our society.

The condition of Labour 3

Jeremy Bray* on the surrender to Whitehall orthodoxy

Treasury versus socialism

The longer we wait for an election, the stronger will be the demand for Labour to produce a fresh economic policy. In October, voters would have been ready to give the government credit for reducing inflation. By March, they will be asking what plans there are for restoring growth and full employment.

Pressures from the unions apart, the difficulties of running an industrial strategy in a stagnant economy are becoming obvious. And externally, Germany and France have put Britain on the spot with their agreement for European currency stabilisation.

I put forward the outline of a serious alternative strategy in the NEW STATESMAN on July 14. This was worked out on the Treasury's own model of the British economy, and showed that unemployment could be reduced by a million over four years, given a managed devaluation of 10 per cent, a simultaneous cut of £1 billion in income tax, increases of £5 billion in public authorities' current expenditure, and a temporary increase in corporation tax. Profits, according to the results from the model, would rise rapidly following devaluation: the balance of payments would be strengthened, there would be no increase in public sector borrowing, and instead of increased public expenditure the option could be available of increased leisure for everyone paid for by cuts in employers' national-insurance contributions.

Such projections do not make a strategy, which must be a recipe for dealing with the unexpected. But they suggest that a viable strategy might be developed, and that we are not so boxed-in as the Treasury suggests. I backed up my projections with specific technical suggestions to the Chancellor for the development and testing of such a strategy, and its possible linking with the European currency stabilisation scheme.

The Treasury, however, has shown no interest in these or any other constructive proposals: preferring instead to try to manoeuvre France and Germany into disagreement on minor mechanical rules. They thought they had French support for allowing rates to vary on either side of a 'basket of currencies' – against the German idea for fixing the whole 'grid' of relative exchange rates.

The Treasury argued that the 'basket', by allowing the mark to hit the ceiling before the pound could hit the floor, would tend to make Germany reflate rather than make Britain deflate. But the effect of the 'basket' would widen the permissible variation only fractionally. In reality, exchange rates 'go to sleep' for long periods, then 'wake up' with violent capital flows when speculators

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try to protect themselves against an expected change. Such major spasms with the mark near the ceiling would put the pound on the floor anyway. So the 'basket' versus 'grid' argument was largely superflous – and the Treasury must have known it. They cannot really have thought that the 'basket' would have made a scheme acceptable where the 'grid' would not.

When Schmidt and Giscard, over-ruling their officials, reached agreement, the Treasury fell flat on its face, and the Chancellor was left isolated among the finance ministers. We must now choose whether to join in a European stabilisation scheme that would cause further deflation and unemployment in Britain, or whether to run the gauntlet of torrential speculation – to guard against which still more deflation will be required. Whitehall will put the best face on it by saying we are no worse off for being outside the scheme. Even if that were true, it would be scant comfort to the unemployed.

In the Labour Party we claim to form our own views, but in practice we find ourselves unable to challenge received wisdom. This emerges clearly in Denis Healey's reply to my suggestion that more constructive economic strategies might be available to Britain. Having received the results of my work with the Treasury's own econometric model, he wrote:

> The results that you suggest . . . are at first sight very impressive. I am afraid however that there are a number of objections . . . For instance you imply that we could, as a deliberate act of policy, effect a 10 per cent depreciation of sterling. This is a very artificial assumption. In practice the Government is not free to choose an exchange rate for sterling at will. In any exchange rate market forces cannot be resisted for long, so that the rate must be credible to the market. In a Community system, we should also have to take account of the views of our Community partners. Then, another example, you propose a large increase in corporation tax, whilst neglecting the potential adverse effects on activity and prices. There are other difficulties of this nature.
>
> I readily admit that some of my reservations reflect inadequacies and incompleteness in the formal model. However it is for these reasons that we know we cannot use the model in an entirely mechanistic way, and need to make 'off the model' judgments. In particular the version of the model that you have used does not include a monetary sector or external capital account and so you would certainly have to think about the implications for interest rates and capital movements.
>
> For these reason I hope you will understand my reluctance to commit the resources of the Treasury to the large amount of effort and expenditure of computer time involved in checking results whose value is open to serious question . . .

This closes with an assurance that 'those responsible' will find the points of 'interest and value'. Without suggesting that Denis Healey does not agree with his own letter, this bears the marks of official drafting, for it reflects so closely conversations with the Treasury officials who work in this technical field. It amounts to a superficial hatchet job, which leaves untouched the real argument about strategy.

I said in my NEW STATESMAN article that market forces and the attitude of Community partners are important influences on the exchange rate. But there can be such a thing as a preferred rate, also influencing the actual instruments of market intervention and interest rates. An operational strategy would in any case treat the exchange rate as an intermediate objective, and not as policy instrument in itself.

The letter talks about disincentive effects of higher corporation taxes, but does not refer to the present confusions over stock relief – which virtuually exempt many companies from tax – and ignores my projections of *higher* profits, and subsequent *reductions* of corporation tax. *The point of my exercise was to demonstrate that monetary considerations need not enforce restrictive policies for Britain if consistent objectives are sustained.*

The Chancellor's letter claims that the Treasury are continuously testing and evaluating their model of the economy. But they are not yet carrying out the systematic evaluations of policy which I urged on them ten years ago, and demonstrated eight years ago – and which are advocated by Professor Lawrence Klein, the leading US expert on models. Ministers and lay officials are uneasily aware that the whole framework of policy, the very eyes through which they look at the future, now depend upon the modellers. Yet they cannot understand or criticise what the experts are doing.

The managers of the Treasury model are capable, conscientious officials. Their model is more carefully constructed than those of the London Business School, the National Institute, the Bank of England or the Cambridge Economic Policy group, and it uses more resources than all of them put together. But the officials are incapable of meeting the exceptional demands of pioneering the fresh approach to economic policy which we need.

There are perfectly competent people at junior working level But the senior level constitutes a blockage to new model-based policies which is impermeable when reinforced by Ministers who have no technical training or experience in the field. And if in Britain's particular 'box' – intellectual, as much as economic – there is no other way of finding balanced policies, then we shall remain in our unemployment/inflation/balance-of-payments fix.

There is much else that can be said – about other factors in economic performance, about the role of finance ministers, central banks and economic advisers in Germany, France, Japan and America. But none of it would alter the likelihood that we have got our economic policy braces twisted, and are missing out badly on policy options because of failures within the Treasury. There is nothing anti-democratic about the higher standards that are needed: indeed, the econometric models, and critical access to them, are needed to articulate and democratise the policy-making process. The Treasury's hostility to new technical methods is consistent with their dislike of publication and of open access.

The Tories would be dreadful. But we on the Labour side could be better. We could open up now possibilities by the spring. Vital though it is to regenerate British industry, we shall not get far unless we regenerate British economic thinking.

The condition of Labour 4

Withering away at the grass-roots

Wally Edwards, Labour Party agent for Liverpool, is responsible for all eight of the city's Parliamentary constituencies. Working from a cramped office close to the Mersey Tunnel which, ironically, used to be a bank, he works a 12-hour day for little over £60 a week, with the help of just one secretarial assistant. Even in a city with 12 per cent unemployment, few would envy him his job. Not so far away in the comparatively plush Conservative offices a a team of two full-time agents, one part-time agent, and two secretarial assistants busily organise in support of the locally-implausible proposition that Tory Freedom Works. What makes the contrast all the more striking is that six of Liverpool's Parliamentary seats are firmly in Labour's hands, with one marginal (currently held by Labour) and the other a safe Tory seat, while on the city council the Tories form only the third largest party behind Labour and the Liberals.

Liverpool exemplifies a growing anxiety for Labour, as organisation in the constituencies sinks to the lowest point for many generations. And like many other 'rotten boroughs', there are wards in Liverpool where Labour cannot muster enough support to form any organisation at all. In Glasgow, the North East, South Wales and throughout the North West, the same dismal picture is repeated.

While Conservative Central Office deploys more than 350 full-time agents in the field, covering every marginal constituency, the Labour Party has only 77, scarcely more than half the 131 it employed in 1973. With the majority of Labour agents earning between £3,000 and £3,700 a year, it is perhaps a wonder that the party has managed to hang on to so many. 'I spend half my week knocking on doors collecting the tote which pays my wages,' says one agent, 'when I should be spending my time knocking on doors organising,' – adding. somewhat caustically, that 'even then my wage cheque often arrives months late.' And it goes almost without saying that totally inadequate salaries will produce in the end inadequate organisational results: or, as one Labour MP bluntly puts it, 'if you pay peanuts, you get monkies.'

More worrying perhaps is that the distribution of Labour's 77 agents is hardly likely to produce the most effective results.

Of the thirty or so crucial marginals

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where any general election will be decided, only one-third are covered by a full-time agent. Important seats like Nelson and Colne, Rossendale and Northampton are forced to soldier on with voluntary help alone. Any Tory organiser will admit that Heath's victory in 1970 was due in large part to careful organisation in the marginals, while a similar concentration stemmed Labour's tide in October 1974. Although eleven regional offices throughout the country back up the organisation, Wales posesses only *one* constituency agent – and Scotland, where the SNP threat could be decisive in the next election, has only six employed full-time. Meanwhile East Anglia, and Tory strongholds such as Bexley Heath are over-represented by comparison.

Coupled with Labour's slide in organisation has been a substantial fall in membership. Five years ago the figure for individual membership was 703,000, today it is 678,587 – and as every party member full knows, the figures themselves are no accurate reflection of reality. So long as affiliation for constituency parties is based on a notional 1,000 members, the numbers will remain misleading. On average, constituency party membership is probably around 600, which means that total individual membership would be more like 300,000 than 680,000. And the misery can be taken even one step further by differentiating between the active and non-active members.

Generally, only ten per cent of any constituency's membership is in any way active with the remaining 90 per cent simply paying their £1.20 – or 20p if they are pensioners – and rarely, if ever, attending any ward meeting or party function. A grim picture emerges of a party with only 30,000 activists, badly organised, and leaving marginals unprotected from Tory professionalism.

Surprisingly, it is Transport House's research department which heads most lists as the convenient scapegoat, followed closely by the newspaper *Labour Weekly*. 'Too many researchers producing too much useless bumph,' is a frequently voiced attack. But while this may be a measure of discontent, it is hardly an appropriate criticism. Of the 120 staff employed at Transport House, only thirteen work in research, with a further five in the international department and seven in the press office. Even if the bold assumption were to be made that the Labour Party is already sufficiently well informed, thus justifying a transfer of resources from research to organisation, the saving — at £4,500 per year per researcher — seems unlikely to make a dramatic impact on Labour's problems. Similarly *Labour Weekly* with nine staff journalists and with ambitious plans outlined by Party Treasurer Norman Atkinson, represents at least in aspiration the sort of asset Labour needs. So far, however the expenditure of considerable professional energy has produced very little support from the constituencies. Circulation runs around 10,000, bringing about a deficit of £49,523.

Across Smith Square, Conservative Central Office, without the responsibility of producing its own newspaper (a step which would surely be superfluous) employs a staff of 310. Of these there are 60 in the research department and 23 in the press office. No problems here where salaries are at least £1,000 a year above those of the Labour Party. Although the Tory Party has no fixed annual membership fee, the average contribution at £1.00 a head is roughly the same as Labour's. The difference of course lies in the massive donations the Tories receive from industry, varying between one and two and a half million pounds per year depending on whether an election is looming. Labour's donations from the trade unions, at present add up to little more than £1 million a year.

Given such limited resources, there is an obvious need to employ them as efficiently as possible: but in politics as elsewhere poverty produces inefficiency of the sort you get when opening the oven door is the only available means of domestic heating. Labour Party members notoriously consume much of their time with jumble sales in dusty scout halls, or in collecting the tote, and raffling bottles of wine to the detriment of real political activity. Imagine US Democrats or Italian Communists dreaming up the pursuits peculiar to English politics.

Over the next few years Labour's new headquarters at a cost of £1.6 million will further drain funds. While the unions will no doubt have to foot most of the bill, individual members have so far donated only £50,000 since the appeal was launched at last year's conference.

Labour's novel plan to draft union officials into full time work at the next election may have some tactical success. But of course it won't make any long-term difference to the quality of organisation – finding solutions to such a set of ailments will hardly be simple. An increase in contributions is long overdue, but it might well cut membership back still further.

Like it or not, the answer in the end will probably have to be some kind of public support, as is the case in several European countries. But there is a chicken-and-egg problem involved. By neutralising the Conservatives' financial advantage, such an arrangement would change the political balance of power in Britain. It is therefore only likely to be put in hand by a confident Labour administration. But Labour's performance in office has weakened its electoral appeal so much as to make a majority Labour victory difficult to attain . . . Somehow, Labour will have to find the energy for the first essential reforms within itself.

IRAN — WHAT LORD CHALFONT DOES NOT SAY

In his defence of the Shah's regime in Iran ("This Poisonous Vendetta Against the Shah", The Times, September 18, 1978) Lord Chalfont is really concerned to defend Western capitalism which he sees threatened by any change in the control of that country. "Western oil supplies threatened" – as if a democratic and socialist republican state in Iran would not want customers for its oil! "Trade and British jobs threatened" – but would it not be more sensible (as well as democratic) to be trading in engineering and other manufactured goods and raw materials, rather than in Chieftain tanks and rifles which the Shah uses to kill workers and stop peaceful demonstrations? (See the corporate plan of the Shop Steward Combine Committee at Lucas Aerospace, New Scientist, July 3, 1975).

What is the truth about Iran today? According to the "expert" Lord Chalfont, who boasts of having "studied" Iran in depth: the Shah is trying to bring the benefits of a western-type industrialisation — without the "luxuries of parliamentary democracy on the Westminster pattern" — to a feudal people.

What are the economic and political facts about Iran? First, the Shah is an absolute and brutal dictator, ruling with a one-party puppet parliament. His opponents in the past have found themselves harassed by SAVAK, beaten up, imprisoned, tortured, executed after farcical trials – Amnesty International has estimated that the Shah has up to 100,000 political prisoners in his gaols. It is no wonder that faced with demonstrating millions he found it easy to shoot a few thousands.

Second, despite the immense oil revenues (without which the economy would be judged to be on a level with that, say, of Pakistan) the country is in great difficulties. A programme of industrialisation is being forced through without consultation with workers. This programme has been in a total state of chaos. Who says so? Not the "international brotherhood of bleeding hearts" which has upset Lord Chalfont – *but British capitalist newspapers themselves:*

"Economic gowth has come to a virtual standstill." (The Economist, September 16, 1978). "Long-term planning is in total confusion." "The core of the past 10 years' agricultural strategy . . . has failed embarrassingly." "This effective and visible deficit (in the budget) of $10.67 bn is likely to be considerably higher." (All from the Financial Times, September 12, 1978). "A simple worker can get £8 a day . . . a perfectly ordinary two-bedroomed flat can cost £500 a month." (Daily Mail, September 9, 1978).

Workers lucky enough to have jobs face conditions of complete disregard for their safety, hours of work and wages; and the state, through denying them the right to organise independent and democratic trade unions and political parties, tries vainly to control their protests. The latest example is: the workers in Tabriz who have been on strike, in spite of the martial law, have been dismissed (Etla'at September 17, 1978).

What can we do in Britain? We can see that all the historically correct facts are brought out now – not afterwards. And we can protest over the Prime Minister's letter to the Shah; call for an end to martial law in Iran; call for the establishment of free trade unions and political parties in that country; the release of all political prisoners; ask the British Government to end arms sales to the Shah; and finally, the trade unionists should protest in every possible way against the unfair dismissal of their brothers and sisters in Tabriz.

AHMAD GHOTBI for THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE RESTORATION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS IN IRAN (which is sponsored by more than 20 Labour Party MPs, and several members of the General Council of the TRADES UNION CONGRESS) BCM 816 London WC1V 6XX.

AHMAD GHOTBI's writings include: *Labour Law and Strikes in Iran; Iran: Where to Begin? Dr Owen defends despotism in Iran; Was Mussadeq a democrat?*

P.S. On Wednesday September 20 the above advertisement which has since been slightly modified was offered to The Times, but The Times refused to print it on the grounds that it contained false items. The Times did not specify which items were false. In our opinion this is a censorship of the truth.

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Deception, over-optimism, and the path to war in Namibia

The crisis that Vorster manufactured

'One of the most important things that has happened in South Africa recently is the readiness of the South Africans to search, in circumstances which are very painful and very difficult for them, for an internationally acceptable solution for Namibia. If they can do it, then the Rhodesians can do it, and I believe that South Africa has shown that it can be done.' David Owen will not want to be reminded of this particular part of his address to the Royal Commonwealth Society on 6 September. Last week John Vorster proved conclusively that the South African government cannot be expected to behave reasonably. Its consultations with the United Nations over the future of Namibia have been nothing more than a propaganda exercise, sustained in the vague (and unfulfilled) hope of persuading the rest of the world that it is not South Africa which is the intransigent party, but SWAPO, the South West Africa Peoples Organisation.

Owen was not the only one to suffer from misplaced optimism. It was with 'great concern, considerable irritation and much disappointment' that Ivor Richard, British Ambassador to the UN, faced up to the fact that the Namibian policy of his Western Contact Group (France, US, Canada and West Germany), so carefully orchestrated over the last year, had totally misjudged South Africa's sincerity.

To be fair to the West, a whole section of SWAPO in Lusaka had also placed faith in the UN, rather than the gun, bringing Namibian independence. In their view, Vorster had abandoned too many negotiating positions (including the principles of Namibia's independence and universal suffrage) to back down at so late a stage. They were also aware that, as a buffer zone, Namibia might be dispensable to Vorster's military strategists: its southern borders were easier to defend than those in the north, and in any case the natural base for ANC incursions would be Mozambique. The SWAPO optimists have now been discredited and vice-president Mishek Muyongo has announced that the guerrilla struggle will be escalated, calling upon 'our friends, especially in the socialist countries, to render all-out military assistance.'

Why did the negotiated settlement fail? South Africa must obviously take most of the blame, but the five members of the Western Contact Group were also at fault. If they hadn't been so eager to trust in the South Africans exhibiting their 'better nature', they might have been more careful to tie them down to the agreement signed on 26 April. Vorster accepted the agreement on condition that it would not be amended later. At the time, the Five were anxious not to frighten him with too much detail, so some central issues were sidestepped. The agreement said there was to be 'adequate supervision' of the election by the UN, but the precise meaning of that phrase was never spelt out. Nor was it specified whether an appointee of the UN or Vorster's Administrator General, Judge Marthinus Steyn, was to have ultimate authority during the transition. No sooner had Vorster signed on the dotted line than he raced back to tell his Parliament that Steyn would remain in control – something SWAPO would never have accepted.

Looking back on South Africa's recent activities inside Namibia, it is hard to understand why the Western powers were not deeply suspicious of its motives. Vorster has always maintained that 'Communist' SWAPO cannot command a real following. Though SWAPO is supported by the USSR and its leaders have incurred some justified criticism, there is absolutely no foundation for this view. However, Vorster will apparently stop at nothing to fulfil his own prophecy. He learnt a valuable lesson in August 1973, during elections to the Ovamboland Legislative Assembly, when a boycott organised by SWAPO reduced voting to less than 10 per cent. Two years later there was a 40 per cent turn-out, but this was only achieved, according to well-documented sources in the Anglican church, as a result of massive intimidation by police and troops. After all those decades of prevarication there can be no other explanation of Vorster's present rush to the polls than his well-grounded fear that a longer period of preparation would increase SWAPO's chances of victory.

The party which Vorster intends to win the election is the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance. Officially multiracial and irredeemably colonialist, it was set up after a split in the South West Africa Nationalist Party, under the leadership of former Nationalist MP Dirk Mudge and with funds from South African and West German business. It upholds the line pursued by the Turnhalle conference, which favours continued 'Bantustanisation' of Namibia and a right of veto for the whites. The DTA was the only party to welcome Vorster's announcement last week and looks like being the only contestant if an election is held this year. Mudge's African ally is Pastor Cornelius Ndjoba, chief minister of the Ovamboland Bantustan. Ndjoba relies on South African military support to maintain control of his people and is an avowed enemy of SWAPO. In 1973 his tribal policy assaulted and flogged over 300 SWAPO members who opposed his plans for Ovamboland's self-rule.

If Vorster is so determined to install a co-operative government, why did he risk frustration of his plans by signing an agreement which stipulated that elections would be 'adequately supervised' by the UN? All the evidence suggests he was gambling on SWAPO rejecting the agreement. The massacre of 800 Namibian refugees on Thursday 6 May, four days before SWAPO was expected to announce acceptance, was an utterly cynical act of provocation. Attacks on SWAPO enclaves by DTA members, armed with rifles provided by the South African police, were already underway in March, and for several days the entire township of Katura (the African residential area of Windhoek) was subjected to a reign of terror. On 18 April Proclamation AG26 reintroduced indefinite solitary confinement for the prevention of political violence'. Judge Steyn locked up 100 SWAPO leaders and at one stage only SWAPO's Secretary for Legal Affairs remained politically active.

On 13 July, Steyn altered the 1920 Removal of Undesirables Proclamation to give himself absolute power to get rid of troublemakers. The next day Ed Morrow, Vicar General of the Anglican Church, was expelled from the country. The Anglicans had recently withdrawn their support for the agreement with the Five on the ground of South Africa's transparent insincerity. Also expelled was Heinz Hunke, author of *Torture, a Cancer in our Society*, a 62-page booklet of sworn affadavits and medical reports of torture by the South African security police such as electric shocks to the genitals and water torture.

It was in this context of intimidation that Steyn started to register voters on 21 June, in direct conflict with the UN agreement, which states that the Special Representative will have to satisfy himself at each stage as to the fairness and appropriateness of all measures affecting the political process at all levels of administration before such measures take effect'. Steyn claimed his registration (now 80 per cent complete) was a 'neutral act'; yet 1.5 million Rand and considerable state pressure had been ploughed into the process. The four-year residence qualification was flouted, a move bound to favour the whites. And while Steyn excluded the 25,000 inhabitants of Walvis Bay, he registered many of the 100,000 whites drafted into Namibia in the last three years, who are unlikely ever to claim Namibian citizenship.

When the details of the UN peacekeeping force were drawn up at the end of August (after a visit to Namibia by UN Special Representative Martti Ahtisaari) they included proposals for 5,000 infantry, 2,300 communications logistic and air support personnel, 1,500 civilian field experts to monitor the elections, and 350 civilian police. In Namibia, unlike the Congo or the Lebanon, the UN were prepared to make a significant outlay – up to 300 million US dollars (of which a quarter was to finance the return of SWAPO exiles). But even

From reports by ROGER MURRAY, PATRICK WINTOUR *in London, and* CARYLE MURPHY *in South Africa.*

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these proposals were inadequate, since they omitted any reference to Walvis Bay, the 600-square-mile enclave half way up the Namibian coast which Vorster insists must stay under direct South African rule.

Walvis Bay is the only deep water port between Lobito in Angola and Cape Town. It handles 90 per cent of Namibia's export trade. If it were to remain under South African control, Namibia would be completely dependent on South Africa for economic survival. Its real attraction for South Africa is the Walvis Bay Ridge, off the Namibian coast, which is thought to contain a vast amount of oil. Twenty-five per cent of South African's economy depends on oil: if it maintained control of Walvis Bay, the impact of any future sanctions would be reduced considerably.

No doubt Vorster hoped this omission would deal a final blow to any possibility of SWAPO co-operating with the UN. But SWAPO approved the proposals and at the same time agreed with the UN that at least six months would be needed to prepare for an election. Which made March 1979 the earliest possible date.

It was almost certainly at this point that South Africa determined to go it alone. Pressure had been building up ever since US vice-president Mondale met Vorster last year and told him the US expected universal suffrage in South Africa. Conservatives argued that since sanctions were therefore inevitable, it would be better to face them while the Republic still controlled Namibia.

On 6 September, the very day that David Owen made his optimistic remarks in London, Foreign Minister 'Pik' Botha (a relative moderate) wrote an extraordinary 21-page letter to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. Not only did he insist that the election and independence had to take place by the end of this year, but he also claimed that in earlier negotiations the five Western powers had said only 3,000 UN troops would be sent to Namibia. Why, he demanded, if the transition was to be peaceful, were so many more troops needed? He seemed to forget they were intended to monitor a cease-fire offered by SWAPO (which South Africa has now rejected) in a country the size of France and Germany.

The Western members of the Security Council must now formally propose the UN plan for Namibia's independence. For a few weeks the door will be left ajar for further negotiations with a new South African Prime Minister; but there is very little chance of a moderate candidate, even one such as Pik Botha, winning the Presidential ballot. Thereafter two options will be pressed on the West by Black Africa. First, the West may be asked to vote for a motion declaring that South Africa's occupation of Namibia is a 'threat to world peace', then unilaterally send in a UN force. The prospect of UN troops in conjunction with SWAPO's 5,000 guerrillas confronting 20,000 South African soldiers is not an edifying one.

The second course, already advocated by the Nigerians and SWAPO's representative at the UN, Theo Ben Gurivals, is to adopt mandatory sanctions. Britain currently makes a net foreign exchange gain from trade with Namibia of £300 million a year, so sanctions would certainly involve some sacrifice. However, the main problem would be that the South Africans have succeeded in meshing Namibia's economy with its own in such a way that selective sanctions against Namibia would be about as effective as British ships cruising outside Beira. Sanctions against South Africa would then be the only remaining course. It is one Britain has been anxious to avoid.

Peace or no peace, Israel will still need cheap Arab labour

In Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Israel's coastal resorts, new hotels and pizza parlours crop up almost daily. Their kitchens are staffed by Arab workers from Gaza and the West Bank. Israeli housewives are used to having their groceries delivered by Ahmed or Mahmoud and on the capital's Herzl Boulevard Arab gardeners water the rosebeds between the carriageways. Whatever else happens as a result of the Camp David agreement, there will be no reduction in Israel's dependence on the workforce of the territories it has occupied since 1967. IAN BLACK reports.

If you'd happened to be driving along Israel's coastal highway past the petrol station at the junction of the Gaza and Ashkelon roads early any morning this summer, you'd have seen a strange and disturbing sight. Just after 4 am, as the sky begins to pale, you can see small groups of people standing around the pumps, huddled in corners, leaning against walls. They have just scrambled off delapidated trucks and vans that bring them daily from Gaza, Khan Younis and Rafiah in Northern Sinai, and they are clutching plastic bags containing their food for the day. Some are no more than six or seven years old. The scene has become known in Israel as the Children's Market at the Ashkelon junction.

By 5 o'clock the sun is up and the first employers are arriving. They come in jeeps from the prosperous *Moshavim* (small private or semi-collective farms) situated on either side of the now invisible 'green line' – the pre-1967 border. They are at once surrounded by swarms of waiting workers. In broken Hebrew – but fluent enough to cover the bare essentials of selling themselves for the day – the little labourers persuade the Israelis of their skills: 'Sir I good work sir, 60 pounds all day sir' and so on. Often their services are sold by a *ra'is* (Arabic for 'boss'), a labour contractor who may have the child's parents in debt.

The children pick tomatoes and onions, and tend the flowers in the hothouses of the Israeli settlements. Sometimes they are paid in full for their work – usually a meagre, subsistence wage; often they are cheated even on that. And since their employment is illegal, there is little they can do. If caught by officials of an understaffed and diffident employment service (who have more than once been accused of turning a blind eye to the activities of the *ra'ises* in exchange for a share of the loot) they can expect to be sent home to face reprimand, if not worse, from their irate parents. For them, the exigiencies of life in the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip preclude much soul-searching about the rights and wrongs of child labour.

Since 1967, Israel has become increasingly dependent on the labour not only of Arab children, but of a third of the workforce of the territories it occupied after the Six Day War. For days after the PLO terror attack on Israel's coastal road last March, rubbish piled up in Tel Aviv streets, bakeries were unable to meet their standing orders and some production lines ground entirely to a halt. When there are demonstrations in the West Bank or bombs in Israeli towns, or when Moslems celebrate religious holidays and stay at home – the effect on the Israeli economy is immediate and tangible.

Officially 65,000 Arabs from the occupied territories come to work in Israel every day, representing 5 per cent of a total working population of 1,170,000. Of these 65,000, some 40 per cent work in construction, 25 per cent in industry, 15 per cent in agriculture and the rest in various services. But these statistics relate only to Arab workers employed through the proper channels. Some sources estimate that as many as 100,000 Arabs work daily in Israel. In the construction industry, for example, it is widely accepted that between 50 and 60 per cent of the total workforce are Arabs from the territories – a far cry from the official figure of 16 per cent. It seems fair to assume that a similar statistical gap exists in other sectors. Certainly 'dirty jobs'– are today performed only by Arabs.

The contemporary attitude to Arab labour brings into sharp focus the relationship between Zionism as an ideal and Zionism as a territorial movement claiming all or part of a small and infertile land occupied by another people. The salient characteristic of the Zionist movement, as it grew and developed in Palestine for thirty years of British muddling through, was its attempt to create a separate Jewish economy and society, independent of the Arab sector. Zionist policy – at least the policy of the dominant Labour Movement – was to *exclude*, rather than to *exploit* the Palestinian Arab population. Those Jews, mostly citrus growers, who insisted on employing cheap, unorganised Arab labour sometimes argued – and not always entirely disingenously – that they were thus making a contribution towards *rapprochement* between the two peoples; but the Labour Movement responded with condemnation, boycotts and violence. A generation of British

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Arab workers in Gaza queue for the buses and trucks that transport them daily to Israel.

officials, who knew all there was to know about gangs of coolies, *ra'ises* and native labour, were baffled by the Zionists' insistence on the non-employment of Arabs. Why bother to build a costly new Jewish port at Tel Aviv, staffed by truculent Jewish trades unionists when the unorganised Arab stevedores at Jaffa were prepared, as they had done for generations, to bear cargoes on their backs and wade through the rocks to the shore? The Palestinian Arabs were determined to show that the country would collapse if they refused to work, and the Jews equally determined – perhaps more so – to build their port. During the Arab strike and rebellion of 1936-1939 the Jews created a number of independent enterprises and even the most recalcitrant Jewish old-timers were forced to rely on their own labour.

Between 1948 and 1967 the problem of Arab labour did not exist in its earlier form. Within the state of Israel, the Arab minority – those who stayed behind after the great exodus – was gradually more or less integrated into the national economy, although it tended, of course, to find itself at the bottom of the social scale, somewhere below the oriental Jewish communities.

In the first flush of victory after the 1967 war, the then Defence Minister Moshe Dayan magnanimously proclaimed a policy of freely allowing West Bankers and Gazans, cut off from their respective hinterlands in Jordan and Egypt, to come freely to work in Israel. As the Israeli economy burgeoned after the war, Arab mayors, industrialists and farmers in the occupied territories were soon complaining of manpower shortages. On the other side of the 'green line', there were some spasms of conscience. In a famous case, widely publicised at the time, a veteran woman *Moshavnik* wrote to Dayan describing her mixed feelings about the fact that her husband, after years of labouring from dawn to dusk just to make ends meet, had suddenly become a prosperous employer of Arab labour. It was bizarre, many Israeli's felt, seeing Arabs build the Hadassah hospital or the Hebrew University – practical symbols of the Zionist revival. David Ben-Gurion warned of the consequences: 'The presence of over a million Arabs within the area under the rule of the Jewish state has again given rise to the danger that foreign [i.e. Arab] labour will dominate. Unless there is large scale Jewish immigration [there hasn't been] and unless we take suitable measures to ensure Jewish labour [they haven't and can't], we will become a superior class that relies on its wits and its wealth, but the working masses will not be ours.'

The Old Man was right. The numbers of Arabs employed fell drastically during and immediately after the 1973 war, but were back to normal barely two months later. Attempts by PLO supporters to prevent the daily flow into Israel of Arab labour have had only a marginal effect. It is a sad paradox of the conflict that whatever the political aspirations of the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza, there is nothing they dread more than being cut off from the opportunities of the Israeli labour market. But meanwhile the *Histadrut*, Israel's monolithic trades union, has refrained – probably rightly – from extending membership rights to Arabs from the occupied territories because it has not wanted to work in the service of creeping annexation.

Israeli authorities are sufficiently aware of the vital economic and propaganda issues at stake to ensure that this 'human bridge of understanding linking the Arab and Jewish peoples' – as one official quaintly described it – remains unshaken by such 'abstract' questions as the political future of the occupied territories. Much is made of the fact that workers from the occupied territories who are *legally* employed receive the same wages and social benefits as Israeli Jews and Arabs.

The influx of workers has had some unpleasant side effects, all too reminiscent of other societies where job divisions correspond to ethnic differences. When Noam Chomsky suggested last year that 'the pass system and its consequences will hardly be avoidable if the occupation continues, with its reliance on cheap labour from the occupied areas', he was mistaken in using the future tense. A 'pass system' – different only in degree and notoriety from the South African model – does exist in Israel. According to an order issued by the military government, Arab residents of what are known in official Israeli parlance as the 'administered territories' are not allowed to remain inside Israel proper between 1 am and 5 am unless they are granted a special permit.

Perhaps the most urgent question is whether this dependence is directly related to the widespread belief that Israel must retain control of the occupied territories. Any answer to this question must be a partial one and those who seek vindication of the neat syllogism that profit makes policy and policy makes war/expansion will be disappointed by reality. Industry, traditionally the powerhouse of territorial expansion, is (as in Western Europe) relatively advanced technologically and far more capital intensive than labour intensive. Any doubts about the general political leanings of Israel's captains of industry can be dispelled by a brief glance at the impressive number of them who have declared their support for – and financially boosted – the Peace Now Movement. Another potentially important employer of Arab labour, the country's *Kibbutzim* – which despite their decline still retain considerable political influence – are tending to move into specialised, highly technologised agriculture and light industry. This reduces their dependence on outside labour, which in any case many still oppose for ideological reasons.

The Palestinians continue to come morning after morning, to the building sites, the rubbish dumps, the production lines, the restaurant kitchens, the public parks and fields. Most Israelis, for whom the convoluted ideology of Jewish labour seems both recondite and irrelevant, have grown used to this dependence. But there are nevertheless many who are alarmed by it. They believe that the fathers of Zionism would turn in their graves if they could see thousands of Palestinians – still bereft of *their* national home – hewing wood and drawing water to make the Israel desert bloom. And they know that if the dependence continues, the South-Africanisation of the Jewish state will become not just a disturbing threat, but an irreversible fact.

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London Diary

☐ It was obscurely satisfying to see Callaghan being so unctuous and desperate with African leaders over the weekend. He has discovered that beads and mirrors are no longer hard currency, and from his starting point that represents progress. Given the educational backgrounds of so many Foreign Office men and so many professional politicians, one is reminded by Bingham of Belloc's verses *To the Balliol Men still in Africa*. The stanza I mean is the one which runs:

I have said it before and I say it again
There was treason done, and a false
word spoken
And England under the dregs of men
And bribes about, and a treaty broken.

When I first proposed this as a motto for the affair, some people thought the third line a bit strong. After Wilson's sly non-reminiscences were published, I got more takers. It still seems that all those involved in compounding Rhodesia's misery and repression into a war are going to get away with it. Lucky for them that they didn't breach the original Secrets Act. Lucky for them that our system of security and prosecution is blind in the right eye.

☐ Talking of which, I was delighted to see that Jeremy Thorpe was allowed a Swiss holiday, and charmed to read that the British Ambassador met him at the airport. It's just that friends of mine (facing less serious charges) aren't allowed their passports at all. (Mr Justice Thesiger: 'I don't see why anybody wants to go to France at this time of year, Mr Campbell'). But apparently bunnies can and will go to Geneva.

☐ Actually, I feel a nagging sense of loss about the dropping of the charge 'collection of information' in the Old Barnum and Bailey case. The men who feel that they have been given a franchise to observe our lives would have been seen to great advantage if the charge had been pressed. All those Air Force officers spending all that time pretending that open information was really too secret for the rest of us to know. It would have been educational, *ergo* it has been abandoned. Once again, it looks as if military intelligence is to intelligence what military music is to music.

☐ Philip Williams's forthcoming biography of Hugh Gaitskell has been so 'long awaited' that most people have forgotten about it. Yet it promises at long last to appear, and Gaitskell's old associates (those few of them who have not given up politics altogether) could not have wished for a more sympathetic biographer. A fly in the Williams ointment is Brian Walden, who had and has many anecdotes and memories of his old mentor. He refuses to disgorge them, and has said that 'when I meet Hugh in heaven I want to meet him with a clean sheet'. Speed the day.

☐ I think that I was a founder-member of the Anti-Nazi League; at any rate I was asked and proudly accepted. I also think that most people in this country, however bigoted in other senses, believe in giving anyone and everyone a hearing (if they didn't I would try to convince them that they should). It upsets me to see my comrades try to cut against this grain with the absurd business of the NF 'party political'. In the course of several arguments this week, I have come away with the impression that some people on the Left believe a vain thing. That vain thing is the proposition that if there had been less free speech in Weimar the Nazis could have been stopped (some even say 'would', but I spare their blushes). This is foolishness of a high order, and not even senior political thinkers like Peter Hain and Alan Sapper will convince me otherwise.

☐ That's enough on the week's least rewarding debate, except for a thought which came to me in Brick Lane last Sunday. We criticise Unity Mitford and her ghastly entourage of dupes and twerps for being blind to the *menace* of Hitler before 1939. The men who founded the National Front did so *after* the Holocaust was public knowledge. They do not even have the excuse of ignorance, and their infection of racism and violence is probably incurable. Nobody who saw their meeting could doubt that many of their followers carry murder in their hearts. Just in case anyone thought I was soft.

☐ Would it be going too far to say that the British press is rather insular? I only ask because I want to know. It begins to look as if Argentina and Chile will begin real hostilities over a minor territorial claim in the Beagle Channel (which admittedly does affect oil rights and national borders in Antarctica). Nobody, not even someone who welcomes the news of violent rebellion in Nicaragua, can actually welcome the thought of a war. But if there has to be one, could there be two governments less enviable than those in Buenos Aires and Santiago. It just might be the last knell for both of them. Heartening news comes from the exiled Left opposition in both countries, who have signed a joint statement saying that selected and popular governments could solve such disputes peacefully. Fascist governments care so little about the general self-interest that they are often too disordered to recognise their own.

☐ I take leave to doubt whether the Camp David accord will promote peace in the Middle East. It's impossible not to notice, for instance, that it has been welcomed by Dr Henry Kissinger – whose seal of approval is usually the harbinger of a bloodbath of some kind. Interviewed recently by NBC (who are said to pay him $1m per year as a consultant) he said that he couldn't have done Camp David better himself. He then went on to flay the Carter policy in Southern Africa, which is apparently not nearly sympathetic enough to the difficulties of Ian Smith. A lot of people have forgotten Kissinger, and the mound of corpses he threw up in Bangladesh, Chile, Cyprus, Indo-China and elsewhere. It would be a mistake to discount anybody so energetically horrible. In the course of the same interview, Kissinger indicated that if Senator Javits doesn't run again in New York he could be interested in the Republican nomination. Run for your lives.

☐ In the battle for open government, Dr Rhodes Boyson is a broken reed or a spent force or whatever you like. In cases of civil liberty, he is silent when he is not vociferous on the wrong side. How maddening, then, that he should be so right about publishing comparative examination results. Teachers have just won the battle against 'confidential' files on themselves, pleading that information which cannot be tested is of no value. Headmasters love to read out exam results when they are good. Neither group can argue for secrecy when the findings are tough. Too many people are in favour of free access, but against disclosure in their own case. Dr Boyson's demagogic intention to 'prove' that comprehensives are no good is beside the point. It's more of a problem for the luckless Norman St John Stevas in any case – he looks increasingly lugubrious at having to play Bertie Wooster to Wackford Squeers.

☐ The Ford Motor Company is obviously rather enjoying its current stand as a scrupulously law-abiding and line-toeing concern. Life is not so much fun for it in the United States, where its Pinto model has been the object of a series of fantastically costly lawsuits. At one forthcoming hearing, concerning the tendency of the Pinto petrol tank to explode, charges against Ford include manslaughter. Compared to that, it must be positively restful for them to be dealing with a workforce that makes such modest claims, and a government which is such a model of compliance. What this country needs is more Teamsters and more California lawyers.

Christopher Hitchens

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ Leaders of immigrant communities in the Hulme and Moss Side districts of Manchester yesterday were urgently checking for any racial links after at least 500 coloured youths injured six police officers, two of them seriously, and damaged nine police vehicles. Chief Supt Ralph Lees, head of the police division covering the area, stressed there had been no racial undertones. 'Relationships between the coloured community and the police are absolutely excellent,' he declared. – *Daily Telegraph* (Helen Jones)

☐ 'Feel the seat,' said Stirling Moss, steering me into his bathroom. I felt it. It was warm. 'Constant blood heat, old boy. Little things like that are what living in the latter part of the twentieth century is really all about.' – *Sunday Telegraph Magazine* (D. P. M. Salter)

☐ A 15-year-old girl was injured when she slipped and fell between the platform and a moving train. One of the station employees came up and asker her for her ticket. Even though she was injured she had to roll over to get them out of her pocket. – *Southend Standard* (Michael Zoladkowski)

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Not in the Book

As my contributions to this page have so amply demonstrated in the past, I do not claim to be in any way whatsoever a *penseur*. The fruits of the furrowed brow, the contemplative look and the brown study are unavailable here. While other and more serious-minded persons are gazing into the middle distance and worrying about the existence of God and the meaning of the universe and the genesis of good and evil, I myself am buttering another slice of Mother's Pride, reaching out for the honey and riffling through the *TV Times* to find out when *Crossroads* comes on (such a very anxious time we're having just now at the motel. The chalet bookings seem very down for the time of year, despite the presence of that new and rather saucy lady in Reception. I suppose one must just try to train oneself not to mind so much). But even a dedicated *non-penseur* such as I does occasionally have, without meaning to, an original *pensée* that seems on the face of it to be of value and one came to me out of the blue the other day that, ever one to share, I am keen to pass on to you. It is to the effect that no man is, if you follow me, an island.

Developing this *pensée* even further, I would add that when all is said and done, no man is an island entire of itself, meaning that we're all in the same beastly mess together, and every man is a piece of the continent, and by 'continent' I imply its old-fashioned meaning of 'the whole' rather than that bit of land across the sea from Bognor, with its Le Touquet and its Deauville and the Pas de Calais and the areas south, west and east of it, all now made so joyous by being part of the Common Market and therefore able to do us down even more vigorously than they did before. And as a final elaboration of this new concept, I would like to bring forward for your consideration the idea that, although no man is an island, some persons are very much more insular than others, especially in death (I've had a further novel *pensée* about church bells tolling that I'll come to in a moment).

As has been sadly proved possible again and again, it is easy enough to die in large cities a hundred times over without anybody knowing or much caring. Next-door neighbours, or flat dwellers above or below the deceased, seem never to have been alerted by an over-abundance of milk bottles and newspapers, or by that most potent and suspicious indication of trouble, silence. 'She's always kept herself to herself has Mrs Duckworth' the neighbours say in bristly defence of their negligence, or 'We imagined she'd gone to her sister at Frinton.' No, not Frinton this time but just her long long rest instead, flat out on the kitchen-floor for the last three weeks. However, in villages it is virtually impossible for even the shyest violets and the most determined solitaries to cough, let alone die, without somebody noticing – a further inducement to leave the town, if you are able to, and take up rural life, if you can face existence in areas that do not yet boast laundromats and Bingo halls and that modish tuck, the burp-a-minute take-away-Chinese food.

We have recently had a tragedy in our Devon village of Appleton. We had no need, in the ordinary sense, to send to know for whom the bell tolled. We all knew well enough that it was for our greatly admired and loved 'Mrs P', aged 59, mother of five, devoted wife, pillar of the church, staunch member of the Women's Institute, tireless collector for good causes and ceaselessly at work for others – struck down in a moment of time while preparing her husband's bath. She was the sort of person who, after one has read too many newspapers and heard too many news bulletins ('And now the headlines again. The Leyland toolmakers . . .'), gives one some sort of confidence in the future of our country. Only on one occasion did she cause a moment of doubt about her character and intentions. At the last election but one she put up in her sitting-room window, for all to see as they passed by, a defiant Liberal poster. The shock-waves of horror could have been picked up on seismographs as far afield as Torquay. It is true that seventy or so years ago the village was strongly Liberal but it soon saw the error of its hot-headed, impetuous and lawless ways. However, by the last election our dear friend was herself and true blue again.

I know of no more sobering chore, and one that becomes necessary every twenty years or so, than that of having to transfer names from an old and fully filled address book to a new one. There are so remarkably few names that any longer require transferring. Death is everywhere, the Grim Reaper's haphazard pouncings visible on every page. No sense or pattern are discernible anywhere. Nothing is certain but uncertainty. Here today and sometimes here, surprisingly, tomorrow. I have recently been occupied in this way and had prepared myself for remembering once more the dear departed.

And dear they are. Here, for example, is the name of A. C. Bray, his last address a 'private' hotel (I've never understood in what respect they differ from public ones) in Scrope Terrace, Cambridge (Scrope to rhyme with poop rather than grope), and a dynamic teacher of French during my happy boyhood years at Oundle. With his decibels mounting *pari passu* with his blood pressure, this stimulating master, whose noise alone rendered it impossible to snooze even if one had wished to, boomed out the classical plays of frogland in such an effectively dramatic manner that one could fancy oneself positively at the Comédie itself. His exertions frequently caused his nose to bleed, upon which he lay flat on the floor and carried right on with *Phèdre* from the prone position. Have Racine's liquid lines ever before come up from below and swirling round dusty desk legs? I very much doubt it. He had, not the only possessor of an awkward nose, a special affection for *Cyrano de Bergerac* which came to electrifying life, duel scene and all, before our very eyes. When, at the end of that most romantic of plays, the heroine, Roxane, now retired to a nunnery where the autumn leaves are gently and symbolically falling, realises at last that the old noble, wounded and dying hideously before her is the man she has really loved all her life, Mr Bray could be seen, struggling to get the text audibly and clearly out, to be weeping, and the less hard-boiled of us wept with him.

So many others. A charming American, Elizabeth Hudson, with whom I was once discussing social non-contributors and who said earnestly 'Yes, at a dinner-party for 16, you can't afford to have more than 5 breathers', the word 'breather' instantly summoning up the heavy presence of an unsparkling guest. Then there was Edward Cooper, hilarious and brilliant pianist of the lighter kind, flashing away on the fringe of the London nightclub world, invariably merry and splendidly irreverent. And, cut off far too soon, here are four Oundle colleagues of the most agreeable brand. But with the sadness there comes another and happier feeling. A comforting one. It is great gratitude for having known them.

Roger Woddis

Song and Dance

'An inquest on the past has not concerned us.' – Mr Callaghan on his talks with President Kaunda.

An inquest on the past
Has not concerned us,
We see no sense
In always harking back.
The oil supplies we sold,
The whopping lies we told
Were merely old traditions
In the politician's pack.

Aspersions some have cast
May well have turned us
From honest men
To felons in the dock,
But why the song and dance?
Just give us half a chance
And with the past behind us
All those buggers who maligned us
Will get
a
future
shock!

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Letters to the Editor

Rights and obligations

Sir, Jeremy McMullen of the General and Municipal Workers Union (NS 15 September) complains that people do not have 'the positive right' to a number of things including the right to strike; to persuade others to strike; to black products; to demonstrate or to picket. Many may think that his claims are too sweeping.

I suggest that the concentration by trade unions (or by other persons or institutions, including members of parliament and ministers) on rights or alleged rights, while too often ignoring corresponding obligations, is objectionable. It is no less objectionable that many corporations (state or private) likewise claim the right to maximise profits or to operate uneconomically at the expense of the public, whilst also ignoring their own obligations to customers. These claims represent a considerable burden to the unorganised individual who prefers to remain that way in what we are pleased to call a free country. It is totally wrong that such an individual should be faced with the option of joining Mr McMullen and his cohorts in a trade union or a trade association if he is to avoid being trampled on by giant unions or employers. Mr McMullen's call to 'workers' to ignore the courts as the means of obtaining justice and to obtain what they want by 'organisation' (i.e. joining a trade union) and by industrial action, is both selfish and, in the long run, unwise as it will, if heeded, diminish respect for justice and lead to a lawless society.

The advantage which our system of justice offers to every man, woman and child in this country, poor or not so poor and whatever his race, colour or creed may be, is equality in the eyes of the law before any court and the right to have his case judged not according to might, but right. That is something which the corporate/collectivist state which is the product of Mr McMullen's reasoning can never offer. He should reject it out of hand.

S. P. BEST

British Legal Association
29 Church Road
Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Sir, While reading Jeremy McMullen's article a naïve thought came to me. What if a union formed a company which employed workers and sold labour to the management/capitalist company?

QUENTIN LANG

19 Stanley Street
Southsea
Hampshire

Courage under fire

Sir, My object is to rebuke the slurs and implications of cowardice which the reviewer of *The Lasting Honour* (NS 15 September) makes against a very brave man, and which are no part of the book which he claims to be reviewing. Sir Mark Young, the Governor of Hong Kong in 1941, is described by the author as 'very able, tough, courageous, unflappable', and, during the height of the fighting on Christmas Day as being seen walking 'straight through the shelling, neither slackening nor quickening his pace, completely composed and apparently without a care in the world'. Your reviewer however states that 'the governor and commander had secure headquarters on the island in the underground Fortress' and 'nor do Sir Mark Young or General Maltby appear, by the author's account, to have left Fortress Headquarters during the fighting to encourage the soldiers in their desperate resistance'.

Sir Mark's headquarters during the fighting in Hong Kong were not underground but at Government House, which sat, and still sits, prominently above the harbour. There was a dug-out which he hardly used and never slept in. He took every opportunity to go to areas where the fighting was heaviest, and his courage under fire did much to inspire the resistance described in the book. This courage continued throughout the long years of his captivity when despite advancing years and much ill treatment he consistently defied the Japanese.

I know of what I write, since I was one of Sir Mark's private secretaries throughout the fighting. Let me assure you that when he and I went for a walk, he was not the one who was frightened.

TIM FORTESCUE

34 Stanford Road
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Poor taste

Sir, When a pedestrian in the street is killed by an out-of-control car mounting the pavement we are shocked into sympathy and would deplore a cartoon on the subject; but when a man chooses to follow an occupation which is a thousand times more inviting to 'tragedy' and 'grief', then his foolhardiness is understandably the target of a satirist.

HARRY EDWARDS

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A woman's place

Sir, In your article from *Spare Rib* (NS 22 September) Sarah writes: 'I once went through my school physics book and counted 80 pictures of people doing experiments. Only one of these was a girl.' I went through that issue of the NS and, apart from the *Spare Rib* article, all 29 contributors were men except for Anna Coote. 10 out of the 11 letters were written by men. Sexism rode out more blatantly elsewhere in the issue with LWT's full page advertisement for Lillie Langtry. 'As mistress of the Prince of Wales Lillie Langtry appears to have reached the pinnacle of success.'

While I applaud so much of what you publish, it seems worthwhile pointing out apparent contradictions between principle and practice.

PAULINE DRAKE

262 Dacre Park
Blackheath
London SE13

Sir, You score a double zero for allowing Arthur Marshall and Kingsley Amis to review books by Auberon and Evelyn Waugh (NS 22 September). I already see far too much of Auberon Waugh in the *Spectator*, *Private Eye* and the *Evening Standard*, and it appears that his ambition is to offend everyone by the aptest insult and to mount a special onslaught on women by denigrating their books in the *Evening Standard*. It is very odd to see him on TV interviewing less affluent people with distinguished courtesy only to be exceptionally rude about them behind their backs. It is reminiscent of the incident when Evelyn carefully gave a stranger false directions to a railway station out of general malevolence.

I am fairly confident that Auberon bears the scars of Evelyn's battle with himself. We are not getting a fair crack of the whip on reviewing when the whole question of the onslaught on women by the Waugh family is neglected by Amis, whose latest novel sounds exceptionally misogynistic, and Marshall, who has always been respectable and unmarried. When one considers Cecil Beaton's remark that Waugh senior *died* of snobbery, one has in the Waugh family a tradition of considerable richness, but it is wrong and stupid not to ask why Auberon knocks women in the precise way he does, and whether he would not be the happier for psychoanalysis.

BERNARD JONES

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Jolly good value

Sir, Tim Devlin's letter (NS 22 September) is a perfect illustration of a common fallacy. Let us accept the figures he gives – that half the children from independent schools go on to higher education against less than 8 per cent nationally, and that independent schools produce a quarter of those obtaining A-Levels with only 5 per cent of the pupils.

What he implies, and what is quite false, is that moving a child from the private to the public sector of education, or vice versa, will change its own chances of getting A-Level passes by a factor of 5.

The distribution of A-Level successes reflects the distribution of children who would secure A-Levels in any event far more than anything else. Indeed, the evidence is accumulating that the total number of A-Level passes, and their grades, is increasing – a point which also needs to be borne in mind by Rhodes Boyson.

HARVEY R. COLE

9 Clifton Road
Winchester

Sir, In his letter Mr Devlin successfully avoids the whole crux of the anti-public school case. This is not whether it is advantageous to attend such institutions, or whether they represent 'value for money', but something of much deeper social significance.

Few would dispute the 'success' rate of the better public schools, but this is his only justification for continuing a system both socially divisive and immoral. One glance at the backgrounds of over 70 per cent of Tory MPs gives one a good idea of the sort of ruling class it produces. It provides a young boy with the type of arrogance to say on television: 'I like to attend this school so that I can be with my own sort.'

An ex-public school pupil should, unless he is a complete nincompoop, manage to acquire a similar standard of living to the one he was brought up with. In consequence he will be able to send his own offspring away – and so the merry game goes on. Anyone who ignores the sociological implications of this is running away from the most glaring example of inequality in Britain today.

MARK HERBERT

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A. S. Neill

Sir, With the support and encouragement of his family, I am about to start gathering material for a biography of A. S. Neill, I would be very glad to hear from anyone – parent, teacher or ex-pupil – who came into contact with Neill, or was influenced in any way by his ideas on education and on children.

JONATHAN CROALL

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Richmond
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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Ian McEwan

Kamera Obskura

On Photography by SUSAN SONTAG *Allen Lane* £5.50

Dotted along the highways of the north-west United States are official-looking signs bearing a diagrammatic representation of a camera. They indicate to the motorist not so much the experience of a spectacular view, as the *acquisition* of that view in terms of a photographic image. They are an illustration of Susan Sontag's contention that we live in a civilisation obsessed and dominated by images; photographs are not merely images of things, copies of originals, but are material realities in their own right, more real than anyone could ever have supposed, providing us with 'a grammar, and more importantly, an ethics of seeing'. Her distrust of photography and the claims made for it is as profound as her fascination. In a culture based on images we are likely to confuse social change with a change in images, or to equate the freedom to consume a plurality of images with freedom itself; the humanist's claims for photography are naïve and false, the understanding photography gives us of the world is illusory; photographs promote alienation, even when they claim to increase our social awareness; they facilitate bureaucratic and political control; they are acts of aggression, they usurp our reality and they render art obsolete; their mass production and consumption is centrally important to capitalism; photography is the quintessential modernist art.

This is a badly organised, hurried book, but brilliant, glittering with polemic, remorseless in the illustration of the difficult paradoxes of its subject, the kind of book you can imagine might spawn a dozen others. The six chapters, conceived separately rather than sequentially, frequently reiterate their material and sprawl untidily across each other's territory. The effect, however, is to point up Sontag's consistent point of view, which is idealist, and the conviction of her method, which is dialectical.

Light strikes the subject and is reflected through a lens on to light-sensitive material. However much the photographer may intervene to select, compose or distort, the process itself is automatic and independent of him. The photograph appears to offer undeniable proof that something – out there – happened. In this sense photography is quite distinct from any other image-making system. It restores a primitive relationship, a partial identity between image and object – think how hard we find it to tear up photographs of people we love. There is a genuine basis to our lingering intuition that the photograph is something magical. To possess a snapshot of Shakespeare would be like having a 'nail from the True Cross'. A photograph not only resembles its subject, like a painting. It is a part of, an extension of that subject, 'and a potent means of acquiring it, of gaining control over it'.

Consider an old photograph of yourself. How much *younger* you were then –

> photography is the inventory of mortality. A touch of the finger now suffices to invest a moment with posthumous irony . . . photographs intimate the innocence and vulnerability of lives heading towards their own destruction.

It is this photographic pathos as a message from the past, and the 'concreteness of its intimations about social class' that bring Sontag to identify *surrealism* as lying at the heart of the photographic enterprise. For photography has always been drawn by both social heights and squalid depths, by the same class tourism, the same 'bourgeois disaffection' by which Sontag characterises surrealism. And, like the surrealist, the photographer believes, mistakenly, that his activity transcends class interests, that his perspective is universal. While in principle photography has executed the

> surrealist mandate to adopt an uncompromisingly egalitarian attitude towards subject matter (Everything is 'real') in fact it has – like mainstream surrealist taste itself – evinced an inveterate fondness for trash, eyesores, rejects, peeling surfaces, odd stuff, kitsch.

To assert that everything is real is to imply that this somehow is not enough. The fundamental discontent with reality which is the alienation of surrealism has now become part of a general attitude, and only by 'looking at reality in the form of an object – through the fix of a photograph – is it *really* real, that is, surreal'. And of course, the very nature of a photograph – ubiquitous, cheap, easily found or cut out – recommends it to the surrealist sensibility.

If photography is inherently surreal (and remember, this is an idealist's argument), then it should be regarded, Sontag insists, as a relatively feeble means of conveying Truth. The author never pauses from the admittedly hypnotic rush of her own polemic to answer Pilate's question. This is not a careful book, and if it were it would not be so readable. The 'truth' and 'reality' which pepper these pages are sometimes those of the naïve realist, at others the 19th-century idealist, or again are relatively and economically defined in the marxist sense. The meanings shift beneath the words like the changes in a blues song. You feel it is right, but others might call it sloppy. The point here is clear enough. However committed and adept a photojournalist might be, the surreal nature of photography will ultimately drain his work of social significance, and imbue it with beauty, irony and political irrelevance. The careful composition and elegant perspectives of Lewis Hine's photographs of exploited children in turn-of-the-century mills and mines easily outlast the relevance of their subject matter. And in 1934 the marxist Walter Benjamin was regretting the facility with which the camera transfigured a tenement or a rubbish heap – 'It has succeeded in turning abject poverty . . . into an object of enjoyment.'

In a consumer society – consuming images – the aestheticising tendency of photography neutralises the distress it is intended to convey. Pictures taken by W. Eugene Smith of the crippled and dying inhabitants of a Japanese fishing village who were suffering from mercury poisoning arouse our indignation, but also distance us 'because they are superb photographs of Agony, conforming to the surrealist standards of beauty'. The photograph the Bolivian authorities released to the world press in October 1967 showed Che Guevara's corpse laid out in a stable surrounded by a Bolivian colonel, a US intelligence agent, and several journalists and soldiers. It not only presented in tableau form the bitter realities of recent Latin American history, but had an inadvertant resemblance, as John Berger has pointed out, to Mantegna's *The Dead Christ* and Rembrandt's *The Anatomy Lesson of Christ*.

It is because aesthetic distance seems built into the very activity of looking at photographs that their ethical content is so fragile. Time will dump them, even the clumsiest of snapshots, at the level of art, and the very extent to which the Che Guevara photograph is so memorable 'indicates its potential for being depoliticised, for becoming a timeless image'.

In an uncharacteristically schematic chapter Sontag examines the aesthetic claims made for photography since its invention. From the very beginning its first-rate professionals were defensively expounding what they practised – was it truth, knowledge, beauty? Was it a form of self-expression or a kind of detached seeing? And most important, was it an art? But now Sontag detects a greater security and diffidence and anti-intellectualism among the practitioners. Photography not as knowledge, but as . . . photography, engrossed in the sceptical investigation of its own powers. It has made the commonplaces of modernism its very own. It has colonised the notion of art which says that art is obsolete, that the better the art the more subversive it is of the traditional aims of Art. Sontag, for the first time replacing suspicion with commendation, insists that photography transcends all other art forms in the modernist heritage – 'It is the prototype of the characteristic direction taken in our time by both the modernist high arts and the commercial arts; the transformation of arts into meta-arts or media.' In short, she rewrites for the modernists Pater's dictum – all art aspires to the condition of photography.

The plausibility of this argument (and here it is rather implausibly condensed) depends on the centrality in aesthetic concerns one is prepared to grant to what Sontag means by modernism – formalist art concerned primarily with its own nature and limitations. It could be argued that modernism in this sense is not so much a dominant aesthetic now as an available mode, a formal exploration to be superseded, within an artists's working life, by the assertion, or re-assertion, of the primacy of subject matter. High art is liable to render itself immune to obsolescence by its very pluralism. The strength of photography is that, however 'modernist' it is, the subject matter remains of central importance.

There is a fascinating description towards the end of the book of Chinese hostility in 1974 towards Antonioni's documentary film *Chung Kuo*. Sontag uses this to illustrate the function of photography in our own society. Where for us photography is inseparable from

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discontinuous ways of seeing, the fragment or arresting detail acting as a kind of synecdoche, for the Chinese it is an expression of continuity: proper subjects (exemplary activities, smiling people, bright weather) and proper ways of photographing 'which derive from notions about the moral order of space that preclude the very idea of photographic seeing'. What we might have found beautiful in the film, or at least have taken for granted, the Chinese felt to be an insult. Sontag quotes the Chinese criticisms at some length. Antonioni was accused of filming only old-fashioned things – 'he sought out and took dilapidated walls . . .' he paid 'no attention to big and small tractors working in the fields . . . he disgustingly filmed people blowing their noses'. He used dim and dreary lighting and hid people 'in dark shadows'.

The Chinese resist the photographic fragmentation of reality. Photographs must display what has already been described, and what is described has principally two aspects in conflict – the right line and the wrong line. Their society is unified by this 'ideology of stark, unremitting conflict'. We on the other hand see reality as 'hopelessly and interestingly plural' and photography, by 'sceing' everything as ultimately interesting, creates spurious unity and conceals conflict by the discovery of even more diversity. One of the urgent messages of this exciting little book is that photography has become a beguiling and powerful parallel reality that can obscure rather than elucidate the deeper conflicts in our society – images that can be made compatible, even when the realities they depict are not.

George MacDonald Fraser

Keeping the Map Pink

Farewell the Trumpets: An Imperial Retreat
by JAMES MORRIS *Faber* £9.50

It is with mixed feelings, as Lord Macaulay might have said, that we venture our opinion of the work under review. Which is hardly surprising, since James Morris obviously had mixed feelings in writing it, and their ebb and flow can be traced through the text, as a particular enthusiasm or regret or conviction takes over, capturing his imagination and emotions. For it is a rather emotional book, and none the worse for that; the British Empire, when all is said, was a very emotional thing, and anyone who tries to review it coldly and objectively is probably attempting the impossible.

This is the third and final volume of Mr Morris's imperial trilogy; in it he deals with the long goodbye of empire from Queen Victoria's Jubilee of 1897 to the death of Churchill in 1965. It is, like its predecessors, not exactly a history, although there is much good history in it; Mr Morris describes the work as an impressionistic evocation of a great historical movement, and asks at the end: 'Is that the truth? Is that how it was? It is *my* truth.' Fair enough: this is his view of empire, what it meant to him, and how he saw it, both at second-hand and in person towards its conclusion. In a sense, it is not unlike Lord Clark's celebrated personal view of civilisation; one man's looking back, in a highly selective way no doubt, but trying to present a fair overall picture, homing in here and there by way of illustration, and embroidering the whole with his own feelings and reactions.

It was, in the first place, a prodigious job to take on – the British Empire in three volumes – and he has done it marvellously well. The amount of research that must have gone into it is breathtaking, ranging as it does from a proper understanding of, say, Milner's regime in South Africa to personal observation of the public rooms at Shepheard's Hotel, from insights into the minds of Rhodesian farmers to the geography of Yonge Street, Toronto, from detailed study of the Tibet campaign to the sight and sound and smell of Indian villages; it is the work of a good historian who is also a good reporter, and the combination is by no means a common one. Of course, any review of such a book must be as personal as the book itself, and I find it interesting that, as a child of the same generation, he reflects my own feelings about imperial decline pretty closely; in the notes which I took while reading there are only about a dozen exclamation marks signifying disagreement, and not more than three or four places in which I have written 'Tripe' or something stronger. Not bad for a work which, in effect, spans the history of the 20th century.

This was the period in which the British, having gained dominion over a quarter of the world, gradually lost it. With twenty-twenty hindsight we can say it was inevitable, that there were no points at which a different man or policy or quirk of fate would have made a significant change in the process of eventual dissolution. It was going to happen in the 20th century, give or take a generation or two, and it did. It is tempting to think it might have been otherwise, to accuse the late Victorians or Edwardians of complacency and conceit, to see them as spoiled inheritors of great men – certainly I personally cannot help regarding the Milners and Curzons as sadly second-rate beside the likes of Brook and the Lawrences, or Raffles and Mackenzie and Livingstone, but this isn't quite fair. It's easier to build an empire than to hold it, and by the 1900s the holding process was becoming difficult, to be rendered impossible by the effect of two world wars and, above all, by the simple march of history, the enlightenment which the British, far more than anyone else, had spread across the globe.

In the period of imperial decline, the great events are symptoms, not causes, and they are the impressions that I carry away from Mr Morris's book – the Boer War, Fashoda, Gallipoli, the Easter Rising, the Tibetan folly, the rise of Gandhi, Palestine, the fall of Singapore, Indian independence and Suez. His

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treatment of these is historical reporting at its best, and his interpolated sketches of people and places (Lugard, Kitchener, Smuts, Curzon, or New Delhi, Malta, Johannesburg, Jerusalem, and Penang) are splendid. I find myself occasionally parting company with him over some of his marginal generalisations on the imperial theme, where I receive the impression that he is implying, without actually saying so, that things might have been different, and that the cause of decline somehow lay within the British themselves. He keeps repeating that Britain 'had lost the brio of success', 'had lost the touch of empire', 'had lost the taste for the far-flung', or 'lacked the mystery and magic of success'. I question this; it's rather like saying that a man who has been paddling his canoe serenely, finds, on starting to go over a waterfall, that he has lost the knack of serene paddling. In fact, there's nothing he can do about it. And there was nothing that Britain, in a changing world, could have done to keep the map pink.

However, that may be my inference rather than his implication; elsewhere, there are some statements which demand contradiction. I doubt if my father, or Mr Morris's, went to the Great War in a spirit of willing sacrifice, almost of sacrament; they went, like Mallory, because it was there. And I am certain sure that it is not true to say, as the author does, that between the wars the young and the working people did not care about the empire. They cared immensely, with a pride of ownership and superiority that would have horrified a modern liberal. (I would suggest, incidentally, that *A Passage to India* was a far less influential literary work than *The Wolf of Kabul* or *Lionheart Logan of the Mounties,* as published respectively in the *Wizard* and, if memory serves, the *Rover*). And on the most trivial level I question Mr Morris's derivation of the word 'wog', his suggestion that the Victorians were more vulgar than the Edwardians, and his definition of Brer Rabbit as 'pure imperial folk-art' – and I suspect that Joel Chandler Harris would, too.

This is nit-picking; on the big scale, on the things that matter, Mr Morris has got it all right. This is a sensible and civilised view of imperial decline, nostalgic, regretful of some things, honest, justly proud, and curiously contented. As it has a good right to be. It is fashionable nowadays to play up the darker side of empire, and of course it had faults, and evils, and mistakes. In simple terms, and they are the author's, it also tried to do good, and it kept the peace for a hundred years. Whether the world is better for its passing is a matter of opinion; only a bigot could deny that the world was the better for its existence. And by and large, nothing became the British more than the way they left it – uncertain, hesitant, troubled, and occasionally resentful, no doubt, but still with a reasonably good grace. It will be interesting to see whether the last imperial power, Soviet Russia, leaves its Central Asian empire and its spheres of influence so successfully. But that, as a knowing imperialist remarked, will be another story.

David Lodge

The Myth of Decline

Northrop Frye on Culture and Literature: A Collection of Review Essays edited by ROBERT D. DENHAM *University of Chicago Press* £9.10

> The future of poetry is immense . . . Our religion has materialised itself in the fact, in the supposed fact, and now the fact is failing it . . . The strongest part of our religion today is its unconscious poetry.

The shrewdness of Matthew Arnold's prophecy that poetry (read 'literature') would take over the function of a discredited theology has been frequently noted. In England, the takeover has stressed the ethical improvement of the reader, presenting literature as a reservoir of life-enhancing values, or as a kind of moral-psychological gymnasium where one might test oneself in arduous but hypothetical exercises. There is, however, another way of interpreting, and fulfilling, Arnold's prophecy, which is to see the total body of literature as continuous with the production of ritual and myth, three historical stages in the endless human effort to make bearable sense of the world. This is Northrop Frye's way, and it has the incidental advantage of explaining how Christian theology has survived 'demythologisation' by borrowing back from literary criticism an honorific conception of myth and interpreting its Scriptures as serious fictions.

When the great *Anatomy of Criticism* was published in 1957, attention, whether friendly or hostile, was focused on its highly schematic, deductive account of literary form, its bold claim to set criticism on a scientific footing, and its provocative scorn for 'evaluation'. The *Anatomy* was certainly, in one sense, a formalist enterprise, and those commentators who have seen Frye as evolving singlehandedly a kind of literary structuralism long before the European variety became intellectually fashionable are not entirely wrong. Frye's demonstration of the recurrence and mutation of literary archetypes points to a conception of literary 'structure' lying deeper than the level of verbal nuance (where the New Criticism tended to stop) which has much in common with the analysis of narrative by the Russian Formalists and their successors.

This view of Frye, however, tended to overlook the Romantic-utopian inspiration of his criticism, and the quasi-religious role he assigned to literature in human society. He did, after all, begin his higher education as a theological student, and wrote his first book on Blake. It is a merit of Robert D. Denham's partisan but thoughtful introduction to his collection of Frye's early fugitive writings that it brings out the dialectical nature of Frye's theory of criticism, having 'as one pole the total acceptance of the data of literature, and as the other the total acceptance of the potential value of those data'. Focus on the former leads to a formalist or centripetal investigation of the structure of literature, focus on the latter to a centrifugal investigation of its place in civilisation, as nothing less than an imitation of 'the total dream of mankind'. As Denham comments, 'His primary interest in the *Anatomy* is centripetal . . . Much of his other work, however, is directed outward toward the social context of literature.' The two poles between which the critic is compelled to operate correspond roughly to the two opposing yet complementary myths upon which Frye sees Western culture as founded – the myth of freedom and the myth of concern.

There are not many critics whose 20-year-old book reviews one can read with pleasure and instruction, but Frye is an exception to most rules. He combines a North American academic professionalism with a witty, apparently effortless fluency of style that one associates with the best English literary journalism. He is a wonderfully crisp, lucid expositor of complex ideas, and a merciless punisher of cant and pretentiousness. 'Criticism, like poetry,' he declares, 'is either precise statement or blather', and the healthy influence of this principle on his own writing is everywhere apparent in these review essays.

The main interest of the collection is, however, historical, as a record of Frye's intellectual development and a testimony to its consistency. We may trace in these book reviews of the early 1950s the germination of ideas systematically expounded in the *Anatomy*, and even encounter phrases and whole sentences later incorporated in that book. Not surprisingly, works of metahistory, anthropology, psychology, and comparative religion proved especially stimulating to Frye in these years. From Spengler, it seems, Frye derived his cyclic theory of literary modes; Frazer and Jung suggested the possibility of constructing a universal grammar of symbolism; Eliade showed how ritual and myth enabled primitive man to transcend the limitations of life in time – but failed to see how literature performs an

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equivalent function for civilised man. Frye does not subscribe to that very popular modern myth, the myth of decline, though he has identified it and refers to it humorously as the Great Western Butterslide. 'It is not merely that science has destroyed the sense of sacredness in time and space, but that poetry has recovered it for the world to which it really belongs.' That world is, of course, the imagination; and it is Frye's unshakeable Romantic faith in the human imagination that makes him such an optimistic and ebullient inheritor of Arnold's mantle.

Morris Fraser

Anti-Chambers

The Language of Madness by DAVID COOPER *Allen Lane* £4.95

David Cooper is a forceful advocate of 'anti-psychiatry'; he invented the term some 12 years ago and, though he now professes to dislike it, he has since gone on to invent the 'anti-family', the 'anti-university', the 'anti-hospital' where people are given 'anti-treatment', and so on. This book, his third, is an examination of the ways in which the apparently disordered speech and behaviour of the schizophrenic are, in the author's view, a rational and highly articulate commentary on conventional institutions and the schizophrenic's oppression by them. The oppressed Third World is not, he says, a mere geographical land-mass, but a potent element in each Western society and in each individual, the enslaved part of him that can only find and assert itself by means of the wholly private revolution called madness. As this madness is a move towards autonomy it must, says Cooper, be ruthlessly crushed by the 'psychiatric police' – the doctors, the social workers, the relatives. By a process of consensual invalidation or 'labelling' these agents of capitalist society pronounce such a person insane and imprison him in a mental hospital.

But madness is a process of de-structuring, of dislodging bourgeois other-ness, so the madman cannot of necessity communicate in the ordered syntax of the middle classes; madness is about breaking rules. Chaotic utterance carries its meaning in its very disorder; it is a vigorous assertion, in existential terms, of the absurd. The language of madness is 'our own invention', he says, echoing the White Knight – a joyful throwing-off of the order imposed by paternalism and institutions.

Traditional Freudian theories of madness are castigated as too family-based, since the foundation of the Oedipus complex is nothing more than the bourgeois nuclear family. On firmer theoretical ground, Cooper makes the point that the very weakness of psychoanalysis is its elastic ability to explain everything; any objections can be explained as 'resistances' or 'reaction formation' and hence there can be no disproof. Karl Popper said the same thing 25 years ago, and his strictures should be heard and heeded much more often.

Madness, says Cooper, is above all a political condition, one imposed by other people. Harking back to Bateson's 'double-bind' theory, he depicts madness as the only way out of a fearful dilemma. He spelled this out more clearly in *The Death of the Family,* pointing out that the double-bind is in reality a triple-bind; the choice for the individual within the family is between total submission and unendurable guilt, but the final turn of the screw is, he says now, 'the injunction against leaving the field of contradiction imposed by the first two injunctions'. It is like a koan of Zen Buddhism where one must make a response but where each possibility is predefined as wrong. The only way out is de-structuring – alienation from one's family and society but, at the same time, the end of alienation from one's self, a kind of befriendment of the third world within. He agrees that the schizophrenic might have an unusual biochemical configuration – but then so might the man who wants to be a psychiatrist in a state institution.

There is splendid consistency in the fact that Cooper's book is best read backwards. The first appendix, entitled 'What is schizophrenia?', is a concise and useful note on his view of madness and its origin and is, in fact, the only part of the book that deals with the topic of schizophrenic language specifically. The halting, 'blocked' communication of the schizophrenic may well indicate his natural reluctance to share his private thoughts with others, and his 'incongruous' laughing and weeping may be a perfectly natural response to the 'narrow, uncomprehending communication that is all that is possible between himself and the doctors'. Again, 'delusions of passivity' can be very real expressions of the pressure from parents for him to fulfil their own personal ambitions, his oppressive sense of 'being-for-others'.

Cooper's views are in part those of R. D. Laing – but it is one thing to conceive of schizophrenia as an understandable set of defences against a world perceived as oppressive, and quite another to inflate the model into a kind of grotesque universal religion with requirements as binding as those of any fundamentalist faith. Yet the parallels become more and more striking as one reads on. Cooper's own brief excursion into 'madness' seems to me just the kind of conversion experience so well understood by the Rev. Billy Graham or any other Southern preacher, and for that matter by Dr William Sargant. Plunging repeatedly into the water, he sensed a re-making or 'transfiguration'. He writes of strange language and new words implanted in his mind by alien powers (the gift of tongues?), of a dislodgement of guilt and a sense of possession by extraterrestrial 'other-ness'. Then the re-birth. And finally, after it all, the revelation: 'The world's full of shit.'

The first baptised might have worded their sense of the banality of material things differently, yet the parallel holds. Cooper proposes a radical counter-culture that depends, above all, on the rejection of the nuclear family and age-based restrictions, of marrying and giving in marriage, and on the irrelevance of possessions and property. But his language is just as stereotyped as any revivalist preacher's, his ideas just as fossilised, and his promises of liberation just as hollow. A psychiatrist may well, as he says, be an unashamed prostitute – but a psychoanalytic prostitute can probably deliver rather more than an existential pimp. We all know the sad disciples of anti-psychiatry – the groupies, the commune-livers, all in a paradoxical way chained to convention more than anyone else by their studied negations of every aspect of it; far from being liberation, this is a tyranny of unconformity, an imperative 'anti' that drives one to keep a perpetual watch on the way the majority jumps, so as to be able to jump in the other. Further, it is psychotic nonsense to talk of the 'compassionate' use of revolutionary weapons; if it is legitimate to secede from bourgeois social structures, it is just as legitimate to consider them okay to be going on with. David Cooper's title imposes its own 'double-bind', but not with any great subtlety. Where madness is concerned Cooper is a shrewd observer, but a sorry participant.

Jonathan Keates

Dear Writer

William Makepeace Thackeray: Memoirs of a Victorian Gentleman by MARGARET FORSTER *Secker & Warburg* £8.75

'To what extent', runs a favourite Oxbridge exam question, 'is it fair to consider the relationship between an artist's life and his work?' The 19th century offers several prime excuses for replying 'not at all', an answer given added force as further caches of letters come to light and as family embarrassment discloses yet

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more unpublished material. With Wagner, Dickens and Ruskin leading the field as first-rate evidence for those who believe that being a bastard, an icicle or a prig is the sole guarantee for the survival of great art, decent eggs like Thackeray are pushed out of the running purely for having been kind and convivial. Such characters as Becky Sharp, Barnes Newcome and Lord Mohun apparently offer insufficient proof of their creator's authentic, bona fide nastiness.

Sociability and a soft heart lend an additional pathos to his life story. Its materials invoke the very moralising which dulls the edge of novels like *Pendennis* and *The Newcomes*. Gloomy as a hangover, it leads poor old W.M. (Penguin's recent attempt to drop the 'Makepeace' simply won't do) from beginnings as a juvenile nabob, idling through Cambridge on inherited rupees, to failures both as a lawyer and as a painter, to hack journalism and the runaway triumph of *Vanity Fair*. His child-wife goes mad, there is a ridiculous tiff with a stooge called Yates, involving the satanic Dickens and the entire membership of the Garrick Club, and a steady drip of treacly adulation as the early brilliance of the Sketchbooks and 'Snob' papers degenerates into the muzzled censoriousness of the society lecturer, busily adjusting his schedules so that the ladies-in-waiting can fit him into Ascot week.

Success was, indeed, as lethal to his talent as the urethral stricture which helped to finish him off. There was room for a compact modern biography which might authoritatively discuss both these topics, as well as seeking to assess Thackeray's influence on novelists as diverse as Tolstoy and Trollope, both of whom acknowledged it. Neither of these tasks, apparently, attracts Margaret Forster, who has chosen to go her own way and has ultimately failed to justify the perversity of her choice.

The title, with its faint overtones of 'Walter or My Secret Life', is a thumping misnomer. Thackeray was no more a gentleman than George Eliot, and a decade of hobnobbing with duchesses and trying to live like Henry Esmond in a fake Queen Anne *palazzino* in Kensington was unlikely to make any difference. Miss Forster's face-value acceptance of such posturing, a disastrous act of faith, has led to her bizarre determination to let Thackeray tell his own story in an extensive autobiographical 'faction'. Since this has, as she acknowledges, an inevitably limiting effect on our perspective of the subject, the book is at once reduced to the level of an ephemeral entertainment.

By thus wilfully shrugging off one responsibility, she effectively assumes another, that of manipulating the true Thackerayan tone. Now and then, as in the harrowing account of Mrs T.'s suicide attempt over the rail of a pitching ship in mid-passage to Ireland, she hits it off, but for the most part she has sought the real thing in his worst vein of 'dear reader'-ish bluster, mere dust thrown in the eyes of the Victorian reader. As she is clearly not at home with either the vocabulary or speech patterns of the period, the illusion that we are reading the novelist's own work becomes a depressing embarrassment, a trivial conflation of the worst tricks of *Flashman* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Slippery grammar ('I wonder what the world will say about Jane Brookfield and I when we are both dead') and anachronistic cliché ('I seem to be jumping the gun') offer small inducement to regard the text, printed on paper the colour of weak custard, as anything better than a limp accompaniment to the vignettes selected from Thackeray's own work as an illustrator.

The whole imposture is made worse by Miss Forster's evident love of her subject and by the fact that her last biography, a life of Bonnie Prince Charlie, was probably the best ever written on that preposterous figure. A glance at Thackeray himself, in the sardonic pathos of the Waterloo scenes in *Vanity Fair*, say, or the sublime comic nemesis of 'A Little Dinner at Timmins's', offers the ultimate annihilation. Without the verbal dash, the talent for parody and pastiche, the almost poetic visions of opulence and gluttony, or that all-pervading sense of the absurd, the book, as an attempt to simulate the manner of its subject, can only be a time-waster.

TURN OVER A NEW LEAF

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Neal Ascherson

Fighting As Usual

Just and Unjust Wars by MICHAEL WALZER
Allen Lane £7.50

Did you hear the one about the Duke of Sung? Most writers on war know it by heart, I suspect, but Professor Walzer of Harvard offers it to the casual reader. The Duke – this was in 638 BC – was holding one bank of the Hung River. The invading Chu army proceeded to wade into the river and to cross towards him. The Duke, however, declined to attack them while they were in the water, although the Chu army was much larger than his own, and observed: 'Though I am but the poor representative of a fallen dynasty, I will not sound my drums to attack an unformed host.' Well, the Duke of Sung was duly defeated and his army scattered. Mao Tse-Tung wrote: 'We are not the Duke of Sung, and we have no use for his asinine tactics.' Professor Walzer, on the other hand, argues: 'With reference to our own conventions, and until the very last minute, *we are all the Duke of Sung*.'

His book is a jump ahead of the Carter Administration's foreign-policy drafters. They have attempted to introduce human rights into diplomacy. Michael Walzer of Harvard is trying to restore them to war. He is not exactly reviving the attempts by Popes and jurists to lay down a code of just war and how to conduct it, or to define what bullets may be used and which feastdays must be reserved for truce (which reminds me of the Lewisman I knew who assumed that hostilities in the Western Desert would knock off for New Year's Day – 'I got out of my hole but, by God, they chust had fightin' as usual!'). He is saying that a moral convention already exists. It is imperfect, constantly breached, frequently helpless before dreadful choices, but it is there. Almost all soldiers know that in general you don't shoot prisoners, or slaughter civilians; they are less inclined to fire at an enemy with his trousers down, taking a peaceful crap, than at an enemy tramping about with his buttons done up and a soldierly expression. Statesmen and generals are aware that the order to incinerate an entire city or to invade a small neutral country without warning requires some convincing explanation afterwards. In wartime, and even for long spells thereafter, one can get away with amazing things. But in the end, the tide goes down to its old level and certain actions – in the British case Dresden, and the forced repatriation of Soviet citizens – project horribly above the surface of what is regarded as tolerable and moral.

The moral conventions governing war – or supposed to govern war – are pretty tenuous. Tenuous but tenacious, Professor Walzer would argue. He describes them in this book and then, with many examples and reflections, tries to mend some of the biggest holes in the fabric. But, to begin with, he tries to set aside some impatient objections to his project. He will have nothing of the idea that '*inter arma silent leges*', that all is fair in war and that force has its own code of rules. He rejects similar cop-outs from Clausewitz and Eisenhower: the first remarking that war was 'an act of force . . . which theoretically can have no limits', and the latter, with Clausewitz somewhere in mind, saying that 'when you resorted to force, you didn't know where you were going . . . if you got deeper and deeper, there was just no limit except the limitations of force itself'. In its crudest version, and most popular, the idea that there can be no morality of war or in war is Sherman's 'War is hell'. This is a presbyterian sort of doctrine, which says that there was free will until the original sin of aggression was committed by whoever started the war, and that thereafter sin governs the actions of all involved in that war; no better can be expected of soldier or general than fire and massacre and plunder until the Fall is redeemed.

Professor Walzer begins by distinguishing

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just wars from justice in war, and continues with a survey of aggression – 'the name of the crime of war' as he nicely puts it, or 'the only state crime'. This is a rich and fascinating discussion, although it's impossible to imagine that any one reader would agree with Walzer's every proposition. He warns against the domestic analogy: robbery with violence is considered 'worse' than robbery without, but aggression is equally condemned whether it is resisted or not. An act of aggression permits a war of self-defence and a law-enforcement war by the victim's neighbours, and 'punishment' of an aggressor after victory is also lawful.

He investigates the refined justifications for pre-emptive war, or for intervention against another sovereign state. But here, and wherever in the rest of the book he comes to discuss the sort of emergency which might permit a breach of the rules, we begin to come up against the 'Nazi Exception'. All is not fair in war, but against the Nazis it mostly was. Appeasement can be often justified – but not appeasement of the Nazis. The insistence on unconditional surrender is wrong – but not in the case of a régime like that of Hitler. Conquest and political reconstruction of the defeated state, the taking of monstrous chances with the lives of civilians or the neutrality of other countries – all these are contrary to the war conventions, but in the case of the war against Nazis . . . and so on.

The special necessity of the second world war, if special it really was, dominates half this book and detracts from the argument for a war convention. The idea of a 'Verbrecherstaat', owed neither obedience by its citizens nor military self-restraint by its neighbours, is too convenient. Walzer doesn't use that expression, but I wish his 'Nazi Exception' were not so exceptional. For example, in discussing the morality of the American crossing of the 38th Parallel in Korea, the author states that the destruction of a régime whose subjects hadn't sought to replace it is not a legitimate war goal – *unless* 'its activities are a standing affront to mankind'. Now Professor Walzer could push only Nazi Germany beyond that 'unless', certainly not North Korea, but statesmen and generals would certainly at various times since 1945 have set the 'standing affront' stamp on both Koreas, the Soviet Union, China, both German states, both Vietnams, South Africa, Uganda . . . The trouble here is that the Nazi case is presented as – and felt like – an area of necessity almost beyond morality. This is just what Walzer wants to avoid, and just the area into which politicians can expel almost any régime they dislike.

His section on 'means' is much happier. He discusses ancient conundrums like the rights of citizens in a besieged city and newer ones like submarine warfare, sniping and area bombing of residential districts. Josephus, Orwell, Doenitz, Mo Tzu and Sartre all have their say. The section on the rights and wrongs of partisan war and guerrilla resistance, though severe, brings sense into a bitterly argued question. But everything is judged by Professor Walzer's exactingly high standard: 'A legitimate act of war is one which does not violate the rights of the people against whom it is directed.' To dress in civilian clothes and shoot foreign occupation soldiers in the back is such a violation, in Walzer's view, and the execution of partisans in such a case is not a crime.

This is, in other words, a book about liberal absolutes, and it has the attractions and shortcomings which one must expect. Walzer can talk with great force about nuclear deterrence, Vietnam or Hiroshima. But he doesn't even ask whether racism or colonialism are forms of aggression in themselves, so that an action like the Indian occupation of Goa should be categorised as 'self-defence'. And he makes no place for the notion that 'historical laws' confer justice in international conflicts, although the idea that 'progress' has rights over 'reaction' has been held by imperialists and marxists alike.

Professor Walzer is best when he appeals to the human conscience, to the hard-pressed decency of the soldier. I opened De Vigny's *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires*, wondering if it would be helpful, and it fell open at this:

> A ship's captain would never be forced to become an executioner unless it were that a government of murderers and thieves had come to power, and taken advantage of the fact that some poor wretch had grown used to obeying orders blindly . . . in spite of the dictates of his heart.

This English

Professor Crick seems to have perpetrated the solecism of the season: about 30 people sent it in within a week of its appearance (in the Book Page, too). A startling nob's pronoun was all it took – though the first phrase isn't much cop either, according to Roger Sampson, one of our monitors ('I've given up trying to teach at Harvard too,' wrote Mr Sampson, 'since nobody has ever asked me'). Then some whence/whither trouble: I know these words sound very literary and droll, but Mr Harty *et al.* had better muddle along with *where*. Finally, a rollicking near-homophone. £3 for the first entry, £2 for the others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ We gave up trying to teach at Harvard and just gathered round the television sets with the students during the first few days of the Senate hearings when Joseph McCarthy charged the Secretary of the Army, Robert T. Stevens, with trying to blackmail and smear he and his loyal staff. **Bernard Crick** *Guardian* (F. J. Morgan)

☐ The meeting almost foundered on the rocks off Capri, whither I had landed to persuade Gracie of my honest intention . . . She then leaned over the parapet from whence she had launched the festering Stilton and bawled for Boris. **Russell Harty** *The Observer* (John Wardle)

☐ There is a Naturist Foundation at Orpington, a town famous for its marginal swing at election times, and thence I made my way. **Sue Arnold** *Observer Magazine* (E. Thompson)

☐ This is not just another executive perk . . . good clothes are a prerequisite of the job. Let us remember that prerequisite is where the word perk originates anyway. **Berry Ritchie** *Sunday Times* (J. R. Maddicott)

Hermione Lee

First Rites

The Cement Garden by IAN MCEWAN *Cape* £3.50

Ian McEwan's first novel looks as tidy and manageable as the idea of a garden covered with cement. It is very short, and neatly divided into ten chapters, five to each part. Its first scene is funny in the sort of dry, quiet way which leads one to expect a muted satire on lower-middle-class urban family life. The boy's off-hand introduction – 'I am only including the little story of his [my father's] death to explain how my sister and I came to have such a large quantity of cement at our disposal' – sets up a comic anecdote about the arrival of the cement, with some good jokes about the frenzied whistlings and monosyllabic grunts of the delivery men ('I liked this kind of talk'). But readers of McEwan's stories will already be feeling jumpy and strange, on the look-out for peculiar details. The cement-men are 'covered in a fine, pale

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dust which gave their faces a ghostly look'. When the lorry is to be opened, 'the man who had not yet spoken made a savage chop with his hand'. Briefly, the men are made to seem like visiting monsters, and the scene becomes faintly threatening – bizarre, too, because we cannot see it wholly or freely, but only as the 14-year-old boy sees it, each thing separated and distorted through the obsessive, touchy medium of his self-absorption.

The novel never deviates from these methods. All the details have the same blank, precise, passive quality, as of objects in a mirror offering themselves as reflections. All are composed within the intense blur of the narrator's focus, making it as difficult for us as for him to distinguish what is peculiar from what is normal: 'Nor could I think whether what we had done was an ordinary thing to do . . . or something so strange that if it was ever found out it would be the headline of every newspaper in the country'. Every detail suggests some unspeakable thing hidden behind it (like the scrabbling rat in 'First Love, Last Rites') which belongs to the mind, but which the mind would rather disown.

Jack, the boy, has a recurrent dream about a creature lurking in a box with an opening lid. It sums up the sinister encroachment of the unmanageable, which is the novel's most powerful subject. The stinks, garbage, weeds, corpses, pus and wasted sperm with which the book is strewn are not there just for fun, but as necessary images for the mind's undergrowths. The protagonists vacillate, with comic ineptitude, between attempting to suppress whatever is coming to get them (the father is a grotesque and hilarious example of this) and states of trance-like inertia.

The plot, which looks almost foolishly simple, proves unnervingly strange. Once the father's frantic zeal for order has been the death of him, the mother wastes pathetically away, and the children, wanting to be left alone in the house, take time off from their obscure, sex-obsessed private lives to bury her, under the cement left over from the father's plan for tidying up the garden, in his old army trunk in the cellar. Then their hot summer passes with dream-like, exhausting lassitude. The garbage mounts up in the kitchen; from the cellar, through the cracks in the cement, comes 'another bigger, softer smell that was like a finger pushing into the back of my throat'.

The relationship between the four children becomes increasingly intense and peculiar (as always, McEwan treats the ferocious egotism and susceptibility of adolescence with brilliant precision) and yet their peculiarities, such as dressing their younger brother as a little girl, and then as a baby, seem quite ordinary and inevitable, as in a dream. There is a well-established tradition of books about children 'going anarchic' on their own (*A High Wind in Jamaica*, *Lord of the Flies*), but they rely on exotic backdrops for the undermining of 'civilised' behaviour. McEwan, more frighteningly, uses a squalid, unexceptional setting in which ordinary things may change their shape, become unreal and even unrecognisable. The language hovers, with a perfected chill clarity, on the edge of panic:

> The only person I could see was a woman in a red coat standing on a footbridge that spanned the road . . . She was still a long way off, but she looked familiar . . . 50 yards from the bridge I could not resist glancing up. The woman was my mother and she was looking right at me. I stopped. She had shifted her weight from one foot to the other, but she did not move from her position . . . When I was almost under the footbridge I stopped again and looked up. Great relief and recognition swept through me . . . It was not Mother of course, it was Julie, wearing a coat I had never seen before . . . I ran under the bridge and up a flight of wooden stairs. Face to face with her now I saw that it was not Julie either. She had a thin face and straggling greyish-black hair. I could not tell if she was young or old. She put her hands deep into her pockets and swayed slightly.
>
> 'I ain't got any money', she said, 'so don't you come near me.'

Valentine Cunningham

Poor Mouths

And Never Said a Word by HEINRICH BÖLL translated by Leila Vennewitz *Secker & Warburg* £4.50

A Five Year Sentence by BERNICE RUBENS *W. H. Allen* £4.50

The Seven Witches by GEORGE MACBETH *W. H. Allen* £4.95

'We'll have it translated,' the internationalist editor Laspara in Conrad's *Under Western Eyes* glibly assures Razumov, who knows no English but is being urged to write for the ill-named *Living Word*. The painful realisation Conrad labours to evince is that nothing translates that slickly. And haven't we come to know it: look how we keep on and on battling the strange, to bring home from abroad or the past the fugitively slippery meanings of St Paul or Dostoevsky or Dante. The most important strangers (and it's a surer test of class than Nobel prizes), those authors who make us feel we can't afford to misread them, get translated *again*. So if we hadn't already spotted his quality, this second English version of Nobel Prizeman Heinrich Böll's *Und Sagte kein einziges Wort* should really impress on us his stature.

What Böll finds it easiest to be outspoken about also comes easiest to our translating grasp. In *And Never Said a Word*, Fred and Käte share the telling (alternate chapters each) of an extremely compelling story of poverty. A story obsessed – as only the writing of someone who's been hungry, cold and hard-up can be – by the chink of coins, the clickings of fruit-machines, the illustrations on bank-notes, by the warming smells from pickling turnip-tops and frying doughnuts, by sausage-bars, snack-shacks and a chocolate factory. A story whose indignations are quite readily passed across frontiers. In particular, the Church deserves the knocking it gets. Dust a holy statue, as Käte does; scratch the piously powerful neighbour Mrs Franke or the functionaries at the presbytery, and underneath is only 'the heartless paint of the devotional trade': petty vindictiveness, mountainous trivia, flashy careerism. If there's 'no cure for poverty' it's partly because the poor are pressed down into this humility and silence: like Christ in the Spiritual that Käte recalls, they must 'never say a mumbling word'.

But the crucifixion of the poor, Böll's more vociferously overt subject, is not all. What he finds more difficult to speak out about – it still proves hard, but was harder still in 1953 – and what translates only with difficulty is the peculiarly German effort to come to terms with the War. The rubble is shaping into sightly mounds, processing Bishops lapse only occasionally into goose-step, bombing now is done by contraceptives' advertisers dropping rubber storks from hired planes. Thus, saying even a word about the grimmer past is to scrabble filth from under the carpet. But Fred (and Böll) can't forget. A waiter is a face Fred last glimpsed crawling with lice in a field-hospital; born in an air-raid, his twins died of war-vermin; the reiterative vocabulary of death he heard at his military switchboard still repeats in his head. Remembering Rotterdam, he is depressed now by cities that *aren't* ruined. He's feckless, a soak, a haunter of cemeteries: the War, Käte feels, 'put a kink in you. You used to be different.' These are words about moral poverty that must, Böll makes us realise, be said. The book is further evidence of the courageous intensity of one of Germany's leading post-War truthtellers.

From poverty to loneliness; but in its way the world of Bernice Rubens's Miss Hawkins – orphan and spinster whose life is so void she plans suicide on the day she retires from the sweet-factory – is as violent as Böll's. From the hanging of Morris at the orphanage (shocked to be joining the menstruating 'rag-girls') to Miss Hawkins strangling her old Matron in a posh Home, *A Five Year Sentence* simmers with the brutal. It runs red with the blood of Jean Hawkins's menses and her late deflowering, just as her Five-Year Diary (her retirement present) grows 'blood-red' with obedient ticks. For each of this extraordinary novel's raft of believably grey, lost, wanting-to-be-loved people from the wasteland tracts of outer London, living is a matter (in the narrative's favourite word) of colonise or be colonised. And Miss Hawkins is a colony, commandeered by grim memories of the Catholic orphanage, by the lifelong habits of obedience that the Five-Year Diary, itself a sentence to live, turns into daily programmes ('Went to the library and met a man', and such). Above all, she's bossed by the egregious Brian, a turning worm getting the cash to shed an incontinent and tyrannical mother by selling 'services' (2p for holding hands, £50 for going all the way) to lonely women. It all adds up to an unbeatable account of yearning submission and bullying oppression among ordinary people: and resoundingly confirms Bernice Rubens's place among our most distinguished novelists.

By extreme contrast, when lovely poet stoops to folly – or, at least, for lolly – he produces *The Seven Witches*. Still, poetry doesn't pay, pornolalia does, and George Macbeth certainly has, like most of his characters ('"Suck me," she gasped') the gift of erotic tongues. On Cadbury's second fictional outing (she's the first 'Sixty-Nine Agent' in the British Secret Service) her undoubted staying-power in and out of the sheets is dauntingly test-bedded by oily Arabs, the West's wealthiest madam and sex-clinic operator, an aged feminist dike, and assorted intelligence men as 'ambidextrous as newts'. So many 'zipper dinners', though, ill prepare us for some late chat about the Seven Deadly Sins and heavy hinting at the sex-clinic about Dr Mengele. George Macbeth enjoys his fiction ('hot as a Notting Hill curry') too much for us to believe him when he starts wanting it, so to say, both ways.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Coleman

Love a Duck

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One Sings, the Other Doesn't (AA) *The Gate, Notting Hill*
The Beast (GLC X London) *Prince Charles*
The Big Sleep (AA) *ABC Shaftesbury Avenue; Plaza 4*
Le Sauvage (A) *Curzon*
The Legacy (X) *Warner 4*

Claudia Weill, a 31-year-old American with a lot of experience in documentary, began making *Girl Friends* back in December 1975 as a $10,000 short: mercifully, it grew, against severe financial odds, into her first feature. The contemporary story, mostly set in and around rooms, offices and galleries in Manhattan's SoHo district, covers a year or two in the life of plainish, struggling Susan (Melanie Mayron), a photographer subsisting on bar-mitzvahs and weddings but with larger ambitions. Vicki Polon's screenplay – and this is a great compliment – comes over so naturally it might almost have written itself. Here is an even bigger compliment: as we watch plump, bespectacled, bush-haired, snaggled-tooth Susan grin, weep, curse and hope, this gauche, shrewd girl grows before our eyes into someone flickeringly glowing and attractive, with a sort of savouring fullness of expression that implies she will make it – after her own fashion – in the New York jungle. Films are breaking the Hollywood mould here and there through the increasing use of lived-in faces; the Max-Factorised Joan Crawford mask went some time ago; and the Joanne Woodward or Liv Ullmann phiz, susceptible of sudden transformations from homeliness to radiance, now gets a look in. Miss Weill carries this process of humanisation a crucial stage further. With the exception of the mesmerising Viveca Lindfors in a tiny, telling role as owner of the photographic gallery where Susan finally has some of her stuff shown, none of the girl friends on display would be calculated to make a male head swivel in the street, not Anne (Anita Skinner), who moves out of a shared apartment to get married, or elfin, vague, lesbian Ceil (Amy Wright), who moves in for a bit.

The strength of this slight, apparently drifting film lies in the craft with which it gradually acquaints us with Susan and her moods, so that – by the last frozen frame – we are fooled into feeling we know more about her than we do, finding an appealing grace and favour, fervour even, in that 'ordinary' unchic face. There is a nice vein of smartish humour running through. She makes a glum bar mitzvah boy smile for the camera with a terrible gag about Peter Pansky. The rabbi (Eli Wallach), who figures pleasantly if improbably as a married man who gently fancies her but has to take his family to a ball game instead of her on a promised lunch date, comes up with a capper: 'What's a wrench?' Answer: 'It's a place where Jewish cowboys go.' At a party, where she is to meet an on-and-off boy friend, Eric (Christopher Guest in a thoroughly intelligent performance), Susan is asked about Anne's wedding: 'I caught the bouquet . . . then I dropped it.' An alarming cab-driver starts telling her of his mumps and his impotence: she scurries to her doorway. Later, in bed with Eric, there is a gem of a silly scene when she remembers this mumps bit and has him phone his mother to find out if he ever had them as a child: they giggle as grown-ups do under the sheets, unaffectedly, Big Duck and Small Duck. Eric's present to her at the gallery near the end is a live duckling in a cardboard box. Such little connections are omnipresent, to be picked up or not. A key scene finds Anne, feeling tied down with a toddler and husband, accusing Susan of selfishness. Eric is called on. 'No,' he says, 'scared.'

Agnès Varda's career, which began with *La Pointe Courte* (mid-Fifties) and *Cléo de 5 à 7* (1962), going on to *Le Bonheur* (1965) and suchlike, I have followed with waning interest. After a welcome lapse from action, she has returned to public attention with *One Sings, the Other Doesn't*, which spans the fortunes of two girls from 1962, when Pauline/Pomme (an agreeably warm appearance by ginger-haired Valérie Mairesse) is 17 and wan Suzanne (a hollow-faced looker, Thérèse Liotard) 22, up to a lyrical get-together in 1976. Suzanne has a supremely melancholy man, another photographer, and two children – with a third broached – as our story opens. Pomme lies to her parents to procure money for her older chum's abortion; the doleful snapper conveniently hangs himself; Pomme decides to quit home and '*plaquer le bac*', let her school finals go hang. The director steadily intervenes with a quantity of pretentious voice-over, cracking off with a quote from 'the great Simone' (not, alas, Signoret), 'Women are made, not born.' And men, *alors*? Pomme traipses round the countryside with three other ladies, singing silly feminist songs ('Il avait raison, papa Engels . . .') to a group of bewildered-looking locals al fresco before going off to Iran with a gorgeous big tender Iranian and marrying him. Ever her own woman, she revolts when he mildly asks for his dinner, returns to France to have their baby (voice-over: 'She gave birth to a boy in the blaze of day'), suggesting when he comes after her that he make her another and they keep one apiece: he agrees, of course. Meanwhile, Suzanne has started a family-planning clinic in Hyères and postcards fly backwards and forwards between S. and P. S. marries a divorced doctor, also very tender and all's well that ends well. 'Maybe their optimistic struggle could help others,' intones Miss Varda. Given the travelogue gloss of the surface, which is never far from the depths, maybe not. A week for going in one Gate and out the other.

Walerian Borowczyk has made a few works of troubled and troubling genius. *The Beast*, which has suffered a loss of about 4 minutes since I saw it amid a hushed full house at the 1975 London Film Festival, is emphatically not one of them, though some would have you think so. A French marquis, deeply in debt, is concerned to marry off his brutish son Mathurin (Pierre Benedetti) to one Lucy Broadhurst (Lisbeth Hummel), an heiress described as British or American depending which synopsis you read. Mathurin's passion is horses, and their neighing, stamping and copulation begin the revel. Miss Lucy and her aunt Virginia, hopelessly dubbed in foreign-sounding English, drive up with a black, Rochester-type chauffeur, auntie commenting en route, 'Beautiful France has always lived in lust.' At the chateau the marquis is shaving Mathurin, a priest awaits to baptise the fellow, and the daughter of the house is upstairs screwing whenever possible with a young black servant. Erotic and daft emblems abound: phallic bedposts, snails, naughty engravings, the 200-year-old corset of one Romilda, complete with claw-marks, preserved in a glass cabinet. Whether one is supposed to laugh or take all seriously, or just laugh sometimes, remains disastrously in doubt. 'Your father may have made a mistake, Lucy,' murmurs auntie at dinner as Mathurin slops and gibbers. Alone in her room, Lucy in white gauze masturbates picturesquely and inconceivably with a red rose, fantasising the big X-citement: blonde Romilda (Sirpa Lane), lured from her harpsichord in a summer-house by a strayed lamb (found horribly mutilated) into the clutches of the Beast. This vaguely bearish creature has several sizes of organ, all extremely big, and Romilda quickly takes to its advances, her give-me-excess-of-it approach occasioning its death from exhaustion – surely the ultimate in women's lib. Back in the everyday, Gothic world, Mathurin's corpse is also discovered and thereby hangs a tail: the absolute end.

Short shrift: Michael Winner's *The Big Sleep* keeps more of Chandler's unpursuable plot than Hawks did, but – by transplanting the dying American millionaire general (James Stewart) and his two cracked daughters (Candy Clark, and Sarah Miles with a mid-Atlantic accent and *dreadful* hair) to present-day England and having through-those-mean-streets Marlowe all spruced up and with a nice car (Robert Mitchum seemed a good idea in Dick Richards's re-make of *Farewell, my Lovely*: here, forget it) – completely misses the essential seedy knight-errantry. John Mills, Joan Collins, Edward Fox, Harry Andrews, Oliver Reed, Richard Todd and others intent on taking their money and banking it fast, make it the big sleepwalk. Only Colin Blakely imports a nervous spasm of life. Mr Winner uses short flashbacks (line: 'we passed them by the pesticide plant' – image: signboard saying PESTICIDE PLANT) as if anticipating an audience of the deaf-and-dumb. *Le Sauvage*, some nonsense about Yves Montand – an escapee from a big-business American wife – on an island with naughty Catherine Deneuve and a stolen Lautrec, is extremely noisy. *The Legacy*, loony black magic happenings in another English country mansion, has Katharine Ross to gaze at and enough semaphored murders (every time anyone says, 'I'll be back in a minute', the chopper or whatever duly falls) nearly to qualify as a good bad movie. Were it not for you, though, I would have left early: to be precise when a gentleman introduces himself to Miss Ross and male escort thus – 'Oh, by the way, my name is Jason Mountolive.'

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Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

That England

Cousin Vladimir *Aldwych*
Shout Across the River *Warehouse*
Gloo Joo *Hampstead*

Not many leftish intellectuals would nowadays invoke Solzhenitsyn wtih respect, still less admiration; but David Mercer does so several times in *Cousin Vladimir*. Indeed, he seems himself to have become an agnostic version of that brooding moralist. He sees contemporary civilisation in terms, not of blacks and whites, but of blacks and blacks, with little to choose between the tyrannical East and the debauched West, between the Soviet hypocrisy that brands dissent a disease and claps it in an asylum and the British hypocrisy that waxes clamorous and glibly indignant about the abuse of human rights abroad but blinds itself to the iniquities in its own backroom.

Little to choose, yet choose we apparently must. His new play postulates no third way, no Third World, in which its two Russian refugees could find fulfilment and peace. Either they must return home, in the case of Cousin Vlad, a Gulag graduate who has learned the art of living off his wits, to face criminal charges for marketing looted knitwear. Or they must remain, not merely in Britain, but in a corner of Britain that is, it seems, permanently awash with booze and ennui.

This is the main objection to the play. Choice is rarely as stark as it persistently suggests. Let me explain. The sottish, wasted physicist Austin Proctor marries Katya in order to provide a British sanctuary for her cousin and his old friend, the Vladimir of the title, and brings them both to his plush London pad, which turns out to be infested with the desultory mob of freeloading soaks he calls the 'hard core'. His new wife is shocked and saddened, and, after treachery and official blackmail have been added to the domestic inconveniences, she is positively sickened. To the sound of belches, slurps and hiccoughs the sorry saga recedes to its by now predictable end. Katya would rather 'live on my knees in Russia than die in your kind of freedom, heartbroken'. Vladimir, impressed by her sincerity, thrusts aside the vodka to promise his support. He, too, will return to the bearish embraces of the border guards, the KGB, even the hangman, in hopes of being 'born again'.

You see what I mean? If the two defectors had spent their hours in Britain interviewing MPs, fraternising with the liberal intelligentsia, reading *Times* leaders and watching Robin Day on TV, we might understand their eagerness to forsake our shores, though it would (I think) still have seemed absurdly sentimental for the cynical and hard-bitten Vlad to make his destination Mother Russia rather than Holland, Canada, Tanzania, or any of a dozen healthier havens. But they haven't. Late in the play Mercer seems suddenly to realise that there's a fearful hole in his argument, and proceeds to cover it as best he can. 'Two days in this unique environment is hardly a basis for the rejection of the entire Western world,' Austin is made to tell the fidgety foreigners. 'We're not a valid statistical sample.' But this disclaimer is clearly disingenuous, one might say desperate. If this isn't a 'valid sample', or at least a faithful impression of wallowing, slobbering Britain, the play becomes pointless and its conclusion absurd. On the other hand, it is equally absured to pretend that it is statistically 'valid' or even persuasively impressionistic. Either way, an alarming slice of Mercer's moral sermon is doomed to bubble helplessly down the wastepipe of disbelief.

Luckily, something is left. I hope Mercer won't take it amiss if I say he has a better understanding of drink and drinkers than any contemporary dramatist except perhaps Tennessee Williams, and, consequently, a pretty deadly ear and eye for the disgust, the self-disgust, the lies and evasions that constantly seep from the cocktail shakers these people keep inside their skulls. They don't want their supposed friends to escape from the trough in which they themselves are festering. They depend on, yet despise, one another. They scatter their frayed emotions randomly, meaninglessly. One moment Gwen Watford, playing an actress on the skids, is abusing Mark Dignam's inscrutable Vladimir for failing to be the heroic Sakharov of her marinating imagination, and the next she's woozily snuggling up against his knees. She gives a thoroughly discomforting performance, and so does Geoffrey Chater as an ex-army drifter, absently puzzling over his appalling loss of self-respect. So, particularly, do Julian Glover and Sheila Reid, a couple sunk deep into symbiotic alcoholism, he sweaty, resentful and contemptuous, she scatty and maudlin, the Sugar Plum Fairy crocked witless. They and their fellow-lushes may not amount to a judicious summing-up of this earth, this realm, this England. But they should at least send away us amateur topers with a new determination to watch the turnover of bottles on our sideboards and check the number of dots spinning in our eyes.

It has been a week to leave you wondering if some enterprising editor shouldn't dig up John of Gaunt and appoint him his theatre critic. According to Michael Hastings's *Gloo Joo,* this fortess built by Nature for herself is presently manned by immigration officers who are either chuckling bigots or clockwork bureaucrats, and only too happy to exile harmless blacks; and according to Stephen Poliakoff's *Shouting Across the River,* this precious stone set in a silver sea has been sold off for Green Shield stamps, this teeming womb of royal kings impregnated with child muggers. The Hastings is an entertaining anecdote which traces the contortions of a resourceful Jamaican determined to be British – though I must admit, against all the acclaim with which others have greeted the piece, that I found something faintly patronising in its affection for the rascally sandboy, the likeable wangler so spiritedly played by Oscar James. *Shout*, however, has received less respect than it merits. Agreed, its tale of a delinquent girl and her agoraphobic mother is implausible at times. Agreed, it's odd that Poliakoff should constantly berate a corrupting environment, and then suddenly decide that his anti-heroine was a monster from infancy. Agreed, too, that the general tenor of his play, not to mention the particular presence of a sci-fi freak dizzy with fantasies of the extinction of London, suggest that this is a pretty set and standard contribution to the Theatre of Cataclysm as developed by Messrs Brenton, Barker and Hare.

All the same, he has a quirkier and perhaps more original talent than his fellow-prophets. It's revealed in his morbid fascination with self-destruction, self-mutilation: the boy who inexplicably starts chewing glass or, in this play, the girl who coolly watches herself starving to death. It's there in the eccentric and sometimes violent incident, and, most of all, there in the anthropological awe with which he approaches the urban rain-forest. He makes you feel that there is, indeed, something exotic, unnatural and even threatening about laundromats, trading stamps, ice-cream parlours, quick-stick glue, and vast pub-palaces with go-go dancers, disco in the basement, and bars on five floors. 'I was born into the wrong age, 100 years late,' grumbles the headmaster of a comprehensive so endless you need a map to find the exit. 'Don't you know that this is the worst time ever to be alive?' asks one of his more unruly pupils. Other playwrights cite such sentiments. Poliakoff shares them.

Television

Julian Barnes

Being Them

Critics by nature are lazy, sedentary, passive creatures. Television critics are critics to the power of ten: not, of course, in talent, but in reclusiveness, passivity, domestication. As they loll on their viewing couches with the evening's drinks at hand, they laugh contentedly at the thought of other people earning their alcohol with dinner-table hard labour; of dutiful theatre-goers; of smart-party swanks enjoying the true loneliness of bustling society. The television critic settles down, switches on his critic's pen (the sort with a little torch clamped to the top of it) and waits each night for a version of the world to be offered to him. You might think it sounds a pretty unreal existence, and so it is; most TV critics are justifiably a bit furtive about their profession. Yet occasionally they meet people whose view of the world strikes them as even more unreal than their own. It's surprising, and a little alarming, when such people turn out to be television performers, to be the very purveyors of your own refracted reality.

The other evening, wandering out for a fresh jug of beer between *Tomorrow's World* (BBC-1) and *The Sweeney* (Thames), I was frogmarched into a smart party and introduced to Ronald Harwood. It was an interesting and lively encounter, because this column has in the past teased old Ronnie quite a lot about his show – though it's always tried to offer constructive criticism, usually along the modest lines of suggesting that a book programme ought to employ critics capable of reading books, of understanding them and talking about them sensibly (*l'affaire Pizzey* naturally entered our discussion). But I suppose it was a trifle naïve to expect Ronnie's

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thanks for the advice offered. Still, he is, I must tell you (though you'll probably have guessed already), a very charming fellow, and politely didn't call me a 'young [*sic*] prick' until well after my back was turned. At the climax of our discussion, though, it suddenly became clear why he seemed reluctant to heed advice. We had each made our main points quite strongly, when Ronnie came out with his own reason for the general lack of warmth shown towards his programme: '*You* want to be *me*,' he explained.

And then everything fell into place. All of *them*, in there, spend the whole time thinking that all of *us*, out here, spend the whole time wanting to *be them*. That's presumably why commissionaires are posted in the foyers of television centres: to stop people (ordinary people, that is) coming in who want to be other people (special people). Should we be irritated, or perhaps perversely flattered, that those who grace our sets imagine that large slices of the population are boiling vats of envy, eager to take any opportunity of bursting through the screen from the opposite direction? To tell the truth, I suppose I do want to be Ronald Harwood slightly more than I want to be a spice-baster in a Colonel Sanders takeaway; but neither ambition is top-priority.

Having settled this matter in my mind, I prepared for the first of the new series of *Read All About It* (BBC-1) with all the objectivity we critics traditionally strive for; though also, having looked at the credits, with some familiar apprehensions. The panel consisted of a former captain of the England women's cricket team; a lady winningly described by the *Evening Standard*'s preview writer as 'our pets expert'; plus – seemingly as conspicuous as Ardiles in a playground pick-up – Christopher Ricks. So it's very agreeable to report that this was the best show Harwood has yet hosted, and that all the panellists were fluent, funny and, in their different ways, intelligent. Moreover, the show ended with a delightful rumpus as the three critics all stuck it to Sir Alfred Ayer for having written what they clearly considered to be a very boring autobiography. Sir Alfred, plumped up with surprise and annoyance, simply talked faster and faster in reply without once seeming to take cognisance of what the panel were saying. There can be few funnier sights than that of a distinguished philosopher baffled at having his book panned – in the politest fashion – by three people who minutes before were warmly recommending *The Bumper Book of the Two Ronnies*.

I suppose if I said that *The World About Us* (BBC-2) was intriguing, amusing, instructive and beautifully photographed, a certain party might think I wanted to be Julian Pettifer. Well I did, but only to the extent that I also wouldn't have minded being Cyrille Regis or Tony 'Bomber' Brown for the duration of West Bromwich Albion's close-season tour of China. The contrast between the Western professional sportsmen – with a belligerent Ron Atkinson bellowing 'You gotta produce, Laurie, you gotta produce' from the touchline – and the cheerful, cigarette-puffing local populace couldn't have been stranger (at one match, the crowd was asked over the public address system not to shout so much). Not all the WBA players enjoyed the trip ('It's not one of the places I'd pick; I mean, last year we went to Alicante . . .'), but they did well; after all, diplomatic chat at formal dinner parties – 'Which praces hev you wisited in Peking?' 'Er, British Embassy' – isn't exactly what they're paid for. The only moment when East and West truly met was at the circus; a giant panda hurtled ridiculously down a slide on its back, and then blew a brass trumpet while sitting in a bath-chair and being towed round the ring by an alsatian dog. The taste for the grotesque, at least, knows no frontiers.

Sport

Russell Davies

Body-Work

Having played one of the few serious roles in England's black-comedy away win against the Danes, Kevin Keegan was happy to turn up in the *Match of the Day* studio and sell a couple of verbal dummies to Jimmy Hill. It was another nice little performance. Earnestness sometimes gets in a footballer's way when he speaks; but Keegan's earnestness has always been his strongest selling-point. When he says, 'no, seriously', you know you're going to get a considered opinion gravely expressed. In fact, Keegan takes life so seriously that, to my eye, he doesn't look all that well on it. He hasn't got athlete's gloss. For a full-time sportsman, he is a bit on the haggard side, as if he spent his nights down the mine like his Dad. He must be a worrier. He is certainly a character worth looking into.

Kevin Keegan – An Autobiography came out last year, and is now available in Magnum Books paperback (95p). I can't approve wholeheartedly of an 'autobiography' that admits to having been written down by somebody else (John Roberts), but still – the young man was doubtless busy, and Mr Roberts does write with a bearable fluency. When he makes a mistake, anyway, it isn't the one you first thought of: 'they knew he was sincere when he said that neither he or the players was important.' The book turns out to offer quite an interesting picture of the problems faced in club football by a young player of reasonably complicated character and ambitions.

What lies behind these in Keegan's case it is still not easy to say. He was brought up in Catholicism, his father's religion; and though both his faith and his father are now dead, Keegan keeps up an emotional allegiance to each of them. His memories of mining-family life have their traditional side, but having just read Joe Orton's garishly non-familial biography (to be reviewed in next week's NS) I was glad of the odd pantomime anecdote: like the one in which Keegan Senior came home amiably drunk – not a rarity – and fell asleep, whereupon the inventive Mrs Keegan dyed his white hair black, with a deep and near-indelible tint that turned first green and then blue in succeeding months before disappearing altogether.

It seems amazing now that Keegan should have taken his two O-levels into an industrial job rather than a football club on leaving school; and even more astonishing that Pegler's Brass Works of Doncaster (taps and toilet fittings) should have seen fit to play him in only their reserve soccer side. But Keegan, five foot seven today, must have been really tiny then; and not only short, but short of the terrific strength that is the foundation of his talent. (Both he and his many sponsors know he's got a good body: the frontispiece to this book is one of those faintly embarrassing glamour-torso photographs.) It is still something of a mystery to me how Keegan made the transition from Pegler's Reserves and various Sunday League pub sides to Apprentice Professional status at Scunthorpe United; but, as is well known, he did.

Not that there was much status involved in a Scunthorpe apprenticeship. You were required to muck out the lavs, of course, and even to shin up the pylons and wash the floodlights. Besides, the whole club seems to have had a strange resistance to glamour, as Roberts's introduction notes: 'The town's football club has not boomed often. The team was nicknamed the Knuts until an unfortunate transposition in a newspaper prompted a swift change to The Irons.' It must have taken a little time for Keegan's morale to purge itself of a sense of Iron-age shabbiness – witness the famous publicitarian incident when, on arriving at Liverpool, Keegan sat on a dustbin outside the Temporary Offices and allowed himself to be photographed there. 'Well, they are signing a load of rubbish,' he said, taking out his careful insurance against a flop.

The story of Keegan at Liverpool could have been a very bland one, but he makes some surprisingly aggrieved noises about his old club's methods. He would have liked more tact all round – and, accordingly, distributes blame in a tactful circle. He blames Shankly (reluctantly) for not staying out of the way just after his retirement, so that the players could get used to calling the embarrassed Bob Paisley 'boss'. On the other hand, he wishes the club as a whole could have made far better *honoris causa* arrangements for Shankly since he handed over the managership. Then again, Paisley is criticised for treating a faithful club servant inconsiderately. If Keegan ever becomes a manager, he'll be grey-haired in six months with the strain of not offending people, or at least offending them equally, on a rota system.

Keegan himself is possibly a touch neurotic about money. He claims very often that he isn't tight; yet there is a touch of the Don Readies about him – the two used to run a book together on the England squad's putting tournaments. There's a certain grimness about the way he cashes in himself ('I was bitterly disappointed with the financial return from winning the Double . . . the club gave us a bonus of only £2,000 each, dwindling to little more than £400 after tax'). Or is he just more honest about the self-promotion trade than most? Perhaps his best bet would be to be less forthcoming about his affairs; nobody minds a man who minds his own business.

It's hard to blame Keegan for being slightly on his guard against the world. If he hadn't been the wary type to begin with, the beating-up incident at the Yugoslavian airport would have given him every excuse to withdraw; and in his physical life, as his face shows, he drives himself recklessly hard. (His book gives a chastening account of the time he clapped out completely under the strain of competitive football, training, special appearances, advertising, and a punishing TV Superstars event which included a spectacular cycling accident.) Apart from anything else, Keegan's style of play is remarkable for the

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way he will go the long way round to do things. Accepting the ball with his back to goal, he will often move in a great wide circle with it in order to give himself time, and to work up a bit of pace, and to keep the ball sheltered. Often it seems that opponents just haven't the fuel to follow these arcs. His strengths as a mover are much the same as Gareth Edwards's in rugby: prodigious drive in the legs over the first few yards, and also great twisting power in the back and ribs. It isn't unusual to see Keegan running at full tilt with his body at right angles to the direction of movement – sprinting and sidling at the same time. There is probably more body-work in Keegan's play than in any other British footballer's.

But it's all exhausting, and I wonder how long it can go on. Keegan must now be at his best: certainly the Danes thought so. I hope somebody in Germany is following him through the season compiling a best-of-Keegan highlights programme to impress us with some frozen Saturday in February. We must admire him while we can. As a constant fifty-fifty mixture of talent and effort, he is the most exemplary sporting hero we've got, among the professionals. It will be fascinating to see, later on, how the talent will apply itself when the effort, perforce, begins to wane.

Music

Peter Porter

Scraps

Current Convictions by ROBERT CRAFT *Secker & Warburg* £6.50

There is very little about Stravinsky in this book, and it is interesting to get a good view of Craft outside his familiar role of amanuensis. Not that he was ever self-effacing in his conversations with his master: indeed, the later collaborations seemed to be increasingly dominated by Craft, and all along one felt that a certain tone, an arrogance almost, derived from him as much as from Stravinsky. In a very late conversation, when Stravinsky had flown in to New York from Los Angeles, the unnamed interlocutor from the *New York Review of Books* asked the composer how California was when he left it. 'As sunless as a mushroom farm,' Stravinsky replied. That sort of phrase, and the neologistic style of Stravinsky's writing, have raised doubts about the conversations' authenticity.

Auden and Boulez were sceptical of the Stravinsky/Craft memoirs – Auden because he didn't believe that Stravinsky had such a command of English as the books reveal, and Boulez, no doubt, because the drift of Stravinsky's later opinions is hostile to the newer European composers. There is also the famous dismissal of a Boulez recording of *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Craft's contribution to the Spender memorial tribute to Auden is waspish in places (in Venice, Auden's white suit was polka-dotted with Chianti stains, Craft noted) and Auden's appearances in the Stravinsky memoirs are sometimes made to look unengagingly egocentric. However, these may be no more than family fights, and, if one judges by Stravinsky's concerns and not just by style, there is good reason to believe that the Stravinsky/Craft books represent the composer's real thoughts. They fit in pretty well with both his autobiography and with his *Poetics of Music*, the Harvard Lectures of 1940, which Craft had no part in.

One attitude which Craft did not have to learn from Stravinsky was his cocksureness. This is in keeping with the American tradition of correcting Europeans at their own culture game. Pound was the first to make a complete success of the technique, and since his time American scholars have always enjoyed rebuking European sloppiness. There is a sharpness of tone in the writings of American musicologists such as H. C. Robbins Landon, Charles Rosen and Ralph Kirkpatrick which is directed at the complacency of generations of European custodians of the classics. But these men have solid monuments of musical scholarship behind them, and it is hard to feel that Craft is quite of their number. He hasn't edited Haydn or Scarlatti, though he pioneered the recording of the complete works of Webern and has put most of Schoenberg on disc. In *Current Convictions*, he is always ready to snipe at an authority if he is European – at William Mann and Norman del Mar on Richard Strauss, for instance, where his points, though ostensibly made to defend Strauss from British primness, depend on deliberately overstressing the element of moral disapproval in their analyses, especially of *Salome*. Julian Budden's book on Verdi's operas is the one British work to escape censure.

Nonetheless, Craft is an absorbing critic: it is only a pity that his articles on Mozart, Wagner, Verdi and Strauss suffer from a scrappiness endemic to the short or medium-length review. Many of them were written for the *New York Review of Books* and not much has been done to edit them for hard-back publication. A review of a book or a performance needs to be re-thought and recast into a longer piece if it is to warrant reprinting. Perhaps it is time to question the wisdom of collecting reviews into books at all. Shaw could get away with it: most modern reviewers can't. It is also annoying that, possibly to make the volume a little less time-tied, Craft omits most of the details of casting, conducting and production from his notices of opera performances. And one result of following the musical season in New York is that the book comes to seem an over-full documentation of Craft's objections to Mr Harold C. Schonberg, the famous music critic of that city.

There is one essay which captures the incisive and exhilarating spirit of the Stravinsky dialogues: it is called 'The Nostalgic Kingdom of Maurice Ravel'. Although only a review of some books on Ravel, tailed by a few jottings, it is full of original judgments and not merely smart or bizarre. Craft stresses that Ravel never outgrew the world of childhood, and that his dependence on his mother was so overwhelming that it led, after her death, to middle-aged autism. Ravel's works are furnished with toys, mechanical birds, music-boxes and figurines, and his oeuvre is the most refined expedition to fairyland in all music. That sophisticated innocence is reinforced by his superb orchestration and it is one of the ironies of commercialism that this utterly personal style has become the lingua franca of film scores and backings for television ads. Craft ends his piece by quoting from an obituary of Ravel by Stravinsky, taken from a Paris newspaper of 1937. It is an extremely generous assessment of Ravel's peculiar genius.

Weekend Competition

No 2534 **Set by Ms de Meaner**

Time for another acronym comp. Book-titles, please, whose initial letters spell out their own plot. Maximum five goes each; by 13 October.

Result of No 2531 **Set by Jim Anthony**

We asked for double-barrelled names which enclosed the profession of their bearers.

Report **by Fatboy**

You'll probably have heard the rumours by now, and I can't, you understand, officially confirm or deny them. Let's just say – strictly between you, me and the post – that there has been a lot of speculation lately about the next Comp Complex sponsorship coup. The negotiating teams have been busy all summer; the haggling has been of quite Byzantine complexity; and we all dare to hope that Spiro has pulled off the big one yet again. Can't let you in on any more, except, well, we all get a dry mouth at times, don't we, especially after dinner? What with Christmas coming up and so on? All will be revealed in early November. As for this week, a good-humoured and fairly clean response; a Wilson a quip.

Ben Dover-Boyes, the public school master
HAZEL STANLEY

Juno Watts-Cumming, the soothsayer
Anastasia Mostyn-Winter, the regular guest
JOHN STANLEY

Mark Howitt-Burns, the arsonist
STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Walter Wall-Wilton, the carpet salesman
R. M. LYNN

Livia Gunza-D'Ador, the Mafia receptionist
Harry Chooker-Folland, the Channel ferry operator
W. J. WEBSTER

Anna Pollock-Steer-Royde, the woman discus champion
W. S. BROWNLIE

Jolyon Fry de Knight, NS comp. winner
ROD WOODSTOCK

Sheila Bligh-Cheeseleigh, the prostitute
R. D. CONDON

Robin ffolkes-Knightley, petty thief
IAN BARNES

Isadora Dora-Knott, the philosopher
JANET ALDIS-PLAYER

Annie Busby-Hinde, the conductress
Digby Lowe-Sandys, the egyptologist
BARRY ANTHONY

Fanny Dunn-Browne, the nudist
CLAUDE SPETTIGUE

Sir Vere de Scomfert-Heald, the surgeon
ERIC MCPHERSON

Moredecai Ford-Rilling, the dentist
Ivor Rees-Bangor, the pub pianist
GERRY HAMILL

Stewart Baker-Boillett, the chef
GILLIAN DAVIES

Hugh Zapretti-Boyden, the budgerigar breeder
MARGARET WEBB

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Sheila Paula Mannin-Bedd, the nyphomaniac
LAURENCE FOWLER

Hester Wright-Daly, the journalist
WILLIAM HODSON

Celia Lettuce-Downe, the office despatch clerk
COLIN GARRETT

Rhoda Duff-Mair, the jockey
Harvey Syn-Cummings, the tax-collector
MARY HOLTBY

Hugh Wood-Woodger, the policeman
MYRA RICE

Mark Ingall-Day, the teacher
Gail Rayner-Sleete, the weather forecaster
FREYA SEARLE

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ROY KELLY

Bruno Moore-Kegg, the real ale buff
PETER MARKS

Wendy Ffoulkes-Harroway, the babysitter
Willoughby Ernie Finmore-Sirr, the butler
SANDY SMITHIES

William Hoover-Long, the policeman
ERIC RILEY

Una Fishle-Straker, the Leyland toolmaker
ROBIN CHASE

Arne Tyemartin-Fagg, the NS Competition Winner
MAUD GRACECHURCH

Izzy Lew King-Forrey-Ransome, the kidnapper
ROBIN BAIRD

Betty Windsor-Fortune, queen of the
turf accountants
BILL GREENWELL

Lettice Makeham-Littler, the masseuse
ALASTAIR CHAMBERS

Lettice Bootham-Orloff, the theatre critic
JOYCE JOHNSON

Gail Wynns-Cumming, the weather forecaster
CARY LUTON-LIGHTFFOT

Ivor Carter-Wynne, the racing driver
ISABEL EMMETT

Francis Fuller-Frogges, the xenophobic
travel writer
MORAY MCGOWAN

Tony Miles

Chess

No 102 **Against the Computer**

It was in August 1968 that David Levy made his now famous bet with Professors MacCarthy and Michie that no computer program would beat him in a match within ten years. The original wager was for £500, but a year later a third professor increased it to £1,000. Then in 1975 Michie offered to increase his bet by another £250, making the total £1,250, and a confident Levy agreed.

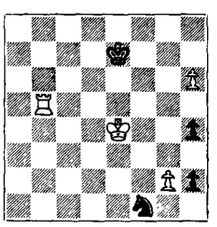
Up to 1977 Levy's money looked completely safe, but then Chess 4.6, a program written by David Slate and Larry Atkin, started to do well in open tournaments, and became clearly the main threat. At the end of 1977 Levy played a match against the other challenger, the Soviet program, Kaissa, and won easily.

The final test, against the rewritten Slate-Atkin program, took place at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto in August. The match was played in a sound-proof booth and, under the terms of the bet, the human half of the proceedings needed to score three points from the six games to win.

The first game was an amusing draw which I give below. In the next two games Levy adopted 'Do-nothing' tactics, playing 1.P-QB4 and an early P-QR3 with both colours. Once out of its 'book' the program soon made serious strategic and positional errors, and duly lost both games. In the fourth game Levy experimented, playing the computer at its own game and provoking sharp tactics. After a fluctuating struggle Chess 4.7 registered its first win. For the fifth game Levy returned to his earlier strategy and duly clinched the match, and the £1,250, 3½-1½.

White: D Levy **Black: Chess 4.7**

1.P-KN3, P-Q4; 2.B-N2, P-K4; 3.P-Q3, N-KB3; 4.N-KB3, N-B3; 5.0-0, B-Q2; 6.P-N3, B-QB4; 7.B-N2, Q-K2; 8.P-QR3, P-K5; 9.N-K1, 0-0; 10.P-Q4, B-Q3; 11.P-K3. A strange opening, but Levy explains that his idea was to reach a dull position where he could gradually expand on the queenside, but unfortunately the program had recently learnt to attack! **11. . . . N-KN5; 12.P-R3? NxKP! 13.PxN, Q-N4; 14.P-KN4, QxPch; 15.R-B2, B-N6; 16.Q-K2, QxRch;** BxRch would be even better, but the program exchanges when it is ahead, **17.QxQ, BxQch; 18.KxB, P-B4; 19.PxP, N-K2; 20.P-B4, RxPch; 21.K-N1, P-B3; 22.N-QB3, R-R4; 23.K-R2, R-KB1; 24.N-Q1, N-N3; 25.R-B1, BxP; 26.BxB, R-B8; 27.N-KN2, R-B6; 28.PxP, R(R)xBch; 29.K-N1, PxP; 30.R-B8ch, N-B1; 31.B-B3, R-Q6; 32.N(1)-K3, R(R)xN; 33.NxR, RxN; 34.B-N4, R-KB6.** Three pawns up in ending, one might expect a program to be quite efficient. **35.R-Q8, P-KR3?** R-B4 is simple. **36.RxP, RxP; 37.R-Q8, R-KB6; 35.R-R8, P-KN4; 39.P-Q5, P-KR4; 40.P-Q6, K-N2; 41.RxP, R-B2; 42.R-R5, K-B3; 43. B-B3ch, K-N3; 44. R-K5, R-B6; 45.B-N4, R-B5; 46.R-K7, R-B2; 47.R-K4, R-Q2; 48.R-K7, P-R5; 49.K-N2, P-N5; 50.K-R2, P-N3; 51.K-N2, R-Q1; 52.P-R4, N-Q2; 53.P-R5, N-B3;** With so few pieces on the board the computer's phenomenal powers of analysis should come into their own, but it still comes remarkably close to losing. **54.PxP! N-Q4; 55.P-N7! NxR!** NxB is met by 56.R-K4, N-B3; 57.RxPch and R-QB4; **56.PxN, R-KR1.** Not 56 . . . R-K1; 57.B-R5! **57.B-Q6, K-B3; 58.P-N8=Q, RxQ; 59.BxR, KxP; 60.B-B4, K-B3; 61.B-Q2, K-N3; 62.B-K1, K-N4; 63.B-B2, R-R4; 64.B-K1, Draw.**

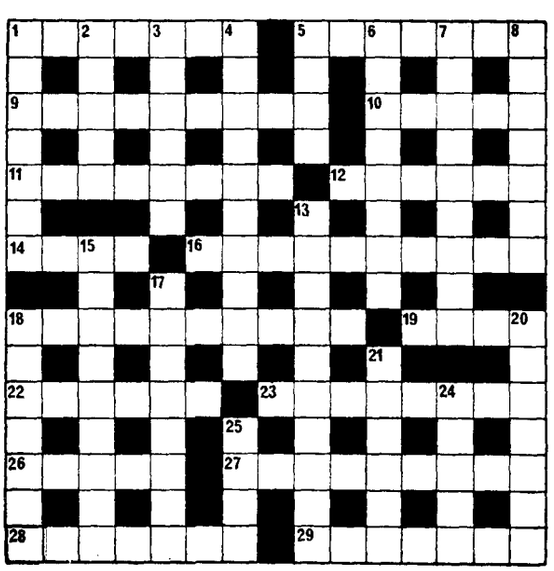


Problem 102
White to play. This odd looking position occurred in a recent Dutch team match. Black had just played P(KN6)xP and the game then had to be adjudicated. What is the result and why? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 11 October.

Solution to Problem 100
1.B-QN6! RxB (or Q-B3; 2.BxB, QxB; 3.RxPch!) 2.RxPch! PxR; 3.QxB mate.

Weekend Crossword 1277

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1277, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 10 October.



ACROSS

1. 'The two hours' —— of our stage' *(Romeo & Juliet)* (7).
5. The place to run wild, being an animal (7).
9. Naiveté of one caring madly (9).
10. Song sung in a lovely rich melody (5).
11. An architect gets one into trouble after parking before everyone (8).
12. This Spaniard is not Father Christmas (6).
14. Seize a plant (4).
16. Used to support the worker (10).
18. Outrages are an alternative during fighting (10).
19. Clubs back to cause injury (4).
22. More ideal (6).
23. Film people who have their last rest disturbed (8).
26. Follow about in action (5).
27. The moon looks different in the distance and it tells the time (9).
28. Deny art is used as occasion for payment (7).
29. Taken to school, a bad learner cheats (7).

DOWN

1. Dancer on tour? (7).
2. Story of a woman over fifty (5).
3. How paper is laid out for floor covering (6).
4. One of these parts of the world would be temperate (10).
5. Look both ways (4).
6. Dissenters show that aristocrats hold everything back (8).
7. Bird which consumes underground stem or insect (9).
8. 'Pleased with a rattle, —— with a straw' (Pope) (7).
13. Rulers with nothing on canvas in their heads (10).
15. Advancement for those in favour (9).
17. Encroached through wrongly impeding (8).
18. Country would have the wrong cure if it abolished a party (7).
20. Biographer who says something frightening on a dandy (7).
21. Sports writer whose destiny lies in skill (6).
24. Name of man about to study climbing (5).
25. Place for a woman without a ring (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1276

A	R	C	L	A	M	P	S	■	E	M	E	T	I	C
M	■	A	■	U	■	A	■	E	■	A	■	R	■	R
O	A	T	E	S	■	V	A	L	E	N	T	I	N	O
E	■	E	■	T	■	E	■	D	■	I	■	P	■	S
B	U	C	K	R	A	M	■	E	N	L	I	S	T	S
A	■	H	■	A	■	E	■	R	■	L	■	■	■	I
■	F	I	L	L	I	N	G	S	T	A	T	I	O	N
A	■	S	■	■	T	■	T	■	■	■	O	■	G	■
N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L	A	N	T	H	E	M	■
T	■	■	U	■	R	■	T	■	E	■	O	■	B	■
I	N	H	E	R	I	T	■	E	C	L	O	G	U	E
P	■	U	■	S	■	I	■	S	■	S	■	R	■	L
H	I	L	V	E	R	S	U	M	■	T	R	A	I	L
O	■	O	■	L	■	T	■	A	■	A	■	P	■	O
N	O	T	I	F	Y	■	A	N	A	R	C	H	I	C

Prizewinners to No 1276

Seonaid Logan
(Newton Stewart)
J .F. Kahn (Novaggio/Ti)
Th. Bougard (London N5)

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol. 96 No. 2480

Contents

394 **Notes:** Ford's money; Smith's passport; the Shah's shopping

396-401 **The Condition of Labour**
Francis Castles: The class electorate
Frank Field: Poverty's comeback
Jeremy Bray: Treasury v Socialism
Stephen Kelly: Death at the grassroots

402 **Namibia:** Bluff, over-optimism and the route to war

403 **Ian Black:** Arab labour in Israel

405 **Christopher Hitchens:** London Diary

406 **Arthur Marshall:** Not in the book

407 **Letters to the Editor**

Books & Arts

410 **Ian McEwan:** Photography

411 **George MacDonald Fraser:** The Empire

Other reviews by David Lodge, Morris Fraser, Jonathan Keates, Neal Ascherson, Hermione Lee, Valentine Cunningham

417 **John Coleman:** Films

418 **Benedict Nightingale:** Theatre

418 **Julian Barnes:** Television

419 **Russell Davies:** Sport

420 **Peter Porter:** Music

420 **Weekend Competition**

421 **Chess and Crossword**

Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company 836 6404 Info 836 5332. 'As You Like It' in repertoire with premiere prod. David Mercer's 'Cousin Vladimir'. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse in Pete Atkin's 'A & R' and Stephen Poliakoff's 'Shout Across the River'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE, 722 9301. Mon.-Fri. 8. Sats 5 & 8.30 'Gloo Joo', a new play by Michael Hastings directed by Michael Rudman. 'A passport to hilarity.' E. Standard.

NATIONAL THEATRE, 928 2252. 'Macbeth', 'The Woman' & 'The Double Dealer', 'The Philanderer', 'Plunder' & 'Plenty', 'American Buffalo'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT 730 1745. Eves 8, Sats 5 & 8.30. Nicol Williamson in John Osborne's 'Inadmissible Evidence'.

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Meetings

BARBARA CASTLE, Fabian Fringe Meeting at Labour Party Conference, 5.15 p.m. Monday 2 October, Baronial Hall, Winter Gardens; 50p incl. tea & biscuits.

GHALIB Poetry Society. For lectures on the poet of the East. S. Irfan, 01-733 4649.

PLP CIVIL LIBERTIES GROUP. Official Secrets — or freedom of information? Claremont Hotel, 270 North Promenade, Blackpool, Wed. 4 Oct., 5.30 p.m. Speakers: Tony Benn MP, Robin Cook MP, Robin Corbett MP, Christopher Price MP. Chair: Jo Richardson MP. 20p at door.

PETER CADOGAN speaks on William Blake, London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., London W8. Sun. 1 Oct. 7.30 p.m. Adm. 30p.

THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSITIES in Higher Education: A Socialist Perspective. A symposium 28 Oct at Birmingham University. Speakers: Trevor Marshall, Professor Robin Pedley, Richard Johnson. Details: Candwell Society, c/o School of History at Birmingham University.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. Problems of Our Time: (1) 'Men, Minds and Machines', informal talk and discussion. Kenneth Kyffin, technologist, Council Member of this Society, Tues. 3 Oct. 7.30 p.m. Mary Sumner Hall, 24 Tufton St, SW1. Visitors welcome 50p (students 25p).

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 23 Norfolk Sq., W2. Sun. 1 Oct. Swami Bhavyananda 'The Concept of Salvation in Vedanta' at 5 p.m. All welc. Vedanta mag. 50p.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public talk Sun. 1 Oct. 8 p.m. 'Three Great Ideas'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

Courses

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